

maintain the cost of health care, how far do other agencies and other entities and other people, whether it be mental retardation, drug and alcohol, higher education, how much of the burden should they carry for health care? If your answer is that they should not bear the total burden, and if your answer is we do not want to take all of these cuts because they affect major areas of people in our constituencies that have major needs, and I'm thinking of the poor and handicapped in particular, then you want to vote, for revenue enhancements, these packages so that those cuts may be restored. That's the question before you. If you do not vote to advance the revenue package bills, then you are, in essence, saying I accept the cuts, I want the cuts, I can live with the cuts, and that's fine, that's a policy decision. But don't give me the argument that you want to wait and see what the spending is for. All that argument says that you haven't taken time to look at the budget to see where the cuts have already been made. And then if you want some lighter reading on the weekend, take a minute and look at the handout, that we've given out twice now, that looks at the preliminary P2 budget, and you can then see that the majority of those dollars on P2 are not extra spending but are, in fact, restorations of those cuts. You'll see \$14 million, over the biennium, for higher education. That would be one that you could look at and see very quickly. You'll see all the areas that says restore, and then other words...other words that again will say maintain. And then you put that and compare it to the P1 and you'll see, yes, I see now...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: ...that's where the cut was made, I see now that with the extra tax that we may get on LB 22, or the other tax packages, I see now where we could restore those cuts. If you want to ask if there's any extra spending, you again look at P2 and see what was in there that was not restoration, NEP*SAT might be an example. So I want to make it clear for at least the discussion, the bogus argument is the one that's being used that you can't talk about these things and tell you no spending, because you already know the spending. The only thing different is this year it's reversed. In other years we had the monies, and the question was, how much are we going to have left over in reserve? Are we going to be right at 3 percent, or are we going to be 4 percent? And we always were trying to add to the spending. And then we'd look and see if we overspent or