

SENATOR LINDSAY: The committee amendments are adopted. Mr. Clerk, anything further on the bill?

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, I have nothing further on the bill.

SENATOR LINDSAY: Senator Moore, to open.

SENATOR MOORE: Discussed it. The bill be advanced.

SENATOR LINDSAY: Thank you, Senator Moore. Senator Warner, on the bill. The call is raised.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise to support the advancement of the bill but to also make some comments on at least where I see the status of where we are. All of us, during the visiting comments that are made on the floor, we...there is this sense, I suppose, of frustration in part that as the two bills stand for appropriations now, it is fairly reasonable but we, obviously, have the gap. I don't know if I quite agree at this point that if only two of the revenue bills pass that...of the five that I think of, that that's adequate. I think it's probably true that you could argue it for this biennium but I'm sure Senator Moore wouldn't hasten to increase, he would just simply widen the gap even further for the out years. But the point that I would like to discuss a little bit is going back to the cause, and this has been said several times but I think it needs to be said several more times perhaps, and that is that we are not going to solve the Medicaid growth problem by a series of cuts in state operations or in cuts in aid programs, it simply is not possible. And if there's anything that ought to be described as the Band-aid approach or the short-term approach to the growth in Medicaid, failing to do anything about controlling that cost, that is trying to absorb the cost through cuts, that's the Band-aid, because it can address the problem this year, will do nothing for the problem next year. You've got the same rate of growth. You're going to have to make another series of cuts and out of that we will end up, if that's the solution of degeneration of state programs, the degeneration of other aid programs over a period of time trying to solve it. Now I'm not going to stand here and argue that I know the solution to the growth in Medicaid because I certainly do not even pretend to. But the same point, I do know or do believe, rather, that in the long run if you're looking for a way to balance the cost of the