

address this, being the Chairman of the committee, how to address this issue on these succeeding years?

SENATOR MOORE: Well, obviously, you know, as I said, I mean, in some ways I wouldn't mind trying to balance the budget for four years from now. Obviously, there are so many unknowns out there, I guess I'm...I'r somewhat hesitant to cut people's budgets to put money in the bank. I mean, and so having said that, obviously, two years from now if, indeed, the problem is how it shows on the sheet, we'll have the same decision we have now of raising taxes or cutting people back to some extent. And, at that point in time, I...I speak only for myself now, I mean, there comes a point in time where you can cut so far and then, obviously, this year, which I don't...in my...with the exception of 1059, I never voted for a cigarette tax increase of any sort or anything like that, but two years from now we'll make those decisions again. If I had my druthers, would I balance in four years? Yes. I don't know if it's fair to ask people to cut the budget assuming that it may not have to occur four years from now.

SENATOR VRTISKA: I appreciate...I appreciate the discussion and I guess I'm still concerned about looking into the future and, as was addressed earlier, as far as the Medicaid issues are concerned, we're taking, obviously, a number of assumptions in the area of Medicaid that nobody can certainly tie down exact and I'm uncomfortable with some of the cuts that were made in the Medicaid program already and I'm wondering if, Senator Moore, I'm wondering if you think that that's another direction we're going to have to continue to go, or what...what is your...in that particular area, what your feelings are.

SENATOR MOORE: Obviously, the last year the nationwide figure was revenues grew at 4.8 percent, Medicaid budget grew at 12 percent.

SENATOR LINDSAY: One minute.

SENATOR MOORE: That's a trend line that causes you problems in Nebraska. That trend line is not quite that severe but it's...Medicaid is growing certainly to double digit rate, revenues are growing at 5, 6 percent rate, and so unless you do something to curb Medicaid growth, you know you're going to have a problem year after year after year unless you find a revenue base that grows with the same rate as Medicaid.