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million and $500 million separation. Since that week off in April, nobody moved of the dime, there hasn't been much going on and this is where we got frustrated. What do I have to do? We seem to come everyday that says Statutory Adjournment Date, June 16th — boy, that is coming right up, we have got to do something, we have got to get off the dime. This is why we put pressure on our Appropriations Committee members to please come up with something, come up with a proposal, come up with a plan and let's throw it out on the floor and see what happens.

Of course there are a lot of holes in it and that goes by the debate that is going on today.

On a couple of items that I wanted to address — when we set our priorities in Banking and Insurance, I voted on sustaining the Maine Health Care Program at $4.5 million. As we put down our priorities, it came out that that can't be funded. They asked me, "Les, that can't be funded." I said, "Well, if it can't be funded, that is on the bottom of the list, what can I do?" I can't do anything about it. But, the Maine Health program basically satisfies about ten percent of the people that qualify for it, approximately 40,000 to 50,000 people qualify for that program and an additional $500 to $1,000,000 on a lottery type of basis. I feel that that is difficult to do when people work side by side who might have the same income levels and one is on the Maine Health Program and one isn't, that is almost like an injustice that we do here in this state. Not to say that if none of them can have it, then no one should have it, that is the other argument, but when you set a priority list, that might have to come off, that is one of the things that has to come off, a sacrifice that might have to be made.

We are funding the children on the Maine Health Program, they are being covered, it is the adults that are not.

On the issue of the temporary taxes — on this list that I passed out, I can't ever remembering answering this survey of me not supporting the temporary taxes. As a matter of fact, in the Lewiston Sun Journal, I was interviewed and they asked me, do you support the temporary taxes? I said, "Mr. Kerr, I would have to look at the economy, will have to find out what our income is, we will have to find out what our programs are and we will have to set priorities." My opponent used that against me saying that I support the temporary taxes because I thought we would let the Maine Turnpike Authority repurchase a parcel of land for $16 million. There was going to be offense but in this budget that is before us, I urge you not to support, I cannot see why in this budget, that we discussed the Turnpike, 4.78 miles of roadway in York County. There were four different bids or appraisals done on that property, they ranged anywhere from $20 million to $1 million. The most current appraisal that was done on that parcel of land is $6.7 million. In this budget, a parcel of land that Maine people own is being resold to Maine people for a cost of $16 million. Who was paying for that? The Maine Turnpike Authority is repurchasing a parcel of land for $16 million. There is going to be a toll which is a tax put on as we in Appropriations unanimously agreed on a proposal that I brought forward that would do two things. The majority of the people who would pay for that, the toll would be put on in York where 75 percent of the people come in from out-of-state. The other goal was, let's not borrow $21 million to solve a $16 million problem over ten years. The committee — I requested, they responded. If you can come up with another proposal, we will do it.

Last Friday at two o'clock I called the bond bank for the State of Maine to make sure that the proposal that I brought forward they understood and it would not hurt our bond rating. At that time, the bond bank said that not only did they not know about my proposal, but not even the Governor's proposal. I was alarmed at that. They did review this proposal and what this proposal does. June 24th, this month, the Maine Turnpike Authority will be holding a meeting to number one, put a 25 cent surcharge for a period of six to seven years on the York toll booth. The reason why it is 25 cents is so that we don't have to borrow $5 million over ten years. We may only have to borrow half of that. To me, that is a
prudent thing to do. That proposal has gone down by the wayside. I assume because the budget couldn't balance in the year 1994. If you take that figure of $410 million and you go back and cut out the collective bargaining that is not in this proposal, as proposed by Representative Foss, which is telling you that you are going to be back here for a supplemental budget at a cost to Maine taxpayers. That is $65,000 a day to bring us back in if it is before January. That, to me, is not a prudent thing to do.

The people of York County will be picking up this tab if in fact the Maine Turnpike Authority does not go along with this proposal. The original proposal was to put the 10 cents or 15 cents across the board on the Turnpike. Those of us who live in York County do not have the fringe benefits of taking 295 from Scarborough to the West Gardiner exit. I thought I could go along with this proposal in the budget simply because 75 percent of the people that would be coming into the York toll booth would be paying this gimmick of $16 million. The Governor could have put $20 million on it, but at the eleventh hour between the Retirement System and the Maine Turnpike, he balanced his budget without the sales tax and income tax that was put on two years ago and that is the fact of the matter.

Several proposals in this budget, probably 75 to 80 percent, this Representative agreed with. The biggest flaw is the Retirement System and the Turnpike and the collective bargaining because that means we are all going to come back for a supplemental which I thought we were all opposed to. We wanted to pass a budget that could get us through a two year period of time that would take some planning and some thought behind it.

I would urge you to allow the committee more time because I think that time is very valuable and because we were down the $410 million. If you put the collective bargaining in that brings you down to $392 million. If you do something with the Retirement System, it puts you down to $145 million. There are items that the committee has agreed upon, we are well below the temporary sales tax of one percent which generates $164 million. Remember, the longer that we wait for that sales tax to go to six percent in '94 and seven percent in '95, $88.1 million. I believe we need more time in Appropriations. I can understand why we came to this point, the Governor did not want his budget on this floor and, if I was the Governor, I would want it here either.

Representative Foss felt, and she strongly felt that way, that the people in this body should have an opportunity to vote on a zero tax increase. This budget does not do that. I want this body to understand, this budget does not do that.

Representative Kutasi is worried about General Assistance, I share that same feeling. As you all know during the supplemental budget, I voted to cut the AFDC, cut the gap, cut the housing needs. We went back, we reviewed it, came back before this body with something that we could all agree on and it passed.

I am a believer, I am a realist, I know we have to make some changes. I think the committee has worked hard to achieve those goals, maybe not as fast as some would like, but I do believe that if we have before you is not the budget that you have been led to believe has no taxes. We are deferring ourselves into debt. We are taking a short-term approach to solving the state's budget problems.

I just urge you to allow the Appropriations Committee some more time so that we can bring up a budget that may have some taxes but it will have some cuts, there will be structural changes in it and a vote that we took for a jobs bond bill when we really and truly need a revolving loan fund that this budget does not allow because the first $650,000 that is generated is not eligible for FAME to lend out money.

Gabriel Electronics in Scarborough received some funds through this revolving loan fund. Those are high risk loans. They received the minimum amount, there is a 125 people employed there, they have come back to seek more funds so they can keep these people at work. Their request will be denied and I don't think that is the approach we should take. I am in business, I know what it is to pay taxes.

My property — even if we level fund and there are no taxes I want people to know my property tax hasn't gone up, my Workers' Comp has gone up, my Central Maine Power bill has gone up, my health insurance has gone up. I just think in looking at this budget that there are some flaws, everybody has admitted to that, there are some legal ramifications, there are some items in here that we can't do because it is going to cost us in the long run. Those items should be reviewed. I would only hope the good Representative from Yarmouth, rather than us asking those questions, that she stand up and tell us what those problems are that are within this budget because I think that is her responsibility to do that and if it was my budget, I would stand here and tell you that.

I urge you to vote against the Minority "Ought to Pass" Report.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Rumford, Representative Erwin.

Representative ERWIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to pose a question through the Chair. Is there a state employee payroll push in this budget?

The SPEAKER: Representative Erwin of Rumford has posed a question through the Chair to any member who may respond if they so desire.

The Chair recognizes the Representative from Old Orchard Beach, Representative Kerr.

Representative KERR: Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House: I have just been at the beach. It is in the budget document Triple E where we defer the last cycle of the 1994/1995 payroll which is nothing more than a gimmick and it is something that we have done in the past and we should not continue to do it.

The SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes the Representative from Orono, Representative Cathcart.

Representative CATHCART: Mr. Speaker, Men and Women of the House: I request permission to pose a question through the Chair.

I would like to ask about the state agency client account which I believe comes under the General Purpose Aid to Education — how much has that special state agency client account been cut and how much has been shifted to the local school districts and could you please tell me where it is in the budget as I haven't found it?

The SPEAKER: Representative Cathcart of Orono has posed a question through the Chair to any member who may respond if they so desire.

The Chair recognizes the Representative from Yarmouth, Representative Foss.

Representative FOSS: Mr. Speaker, Ladies and Gentlemen of the House: I will have to check that,