

Secretary: Vote explanation please.

SB 5501 is the first Joint Ways & Means Committee budget bill. There will be nearly 100 bills of this type. Done separately, these bills result in a disjointed appropriations system that makes it impossible to determine the overall budget of the State until after the fact. Further, any bill above inflation for 19-21 as estimated by CPI should not be approved without an exceptional justification. That current service level exceeds inflation raises questions on the entire budgeting process. Then there is the issue of unilateral wage increases ordered by the Governor so employees could then pay their retirement match has not been analyzed in its entirety. Let alone that it will cost over a billion dollars has not been reported to the public. For these reasons, this Senator plans to vote against most budget bills if they exceed inflation without proof of an exceptional reason.

Sen Boquist