

Senate GOP cuts \$400 million from governor's budget plan

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In a party-line vote yesterday, the state Senate cut \$400 million from Gov. Ed Rendell's proposed budget, bringing the figure to \$27.9 billion.

The move was championed by Republicans who say government must reduce spending because a sluggish economy has slowed revenue collections.

The bill has little chance of passing the House, which is controlled by Democrats who want to advance Mr. Rendell's energy, health care, education and infrastructure improvement plans.

Leaders of the Republican-led Senate are keenly aware of that.

It is only a "starting budget" that moves the process forward, said Senate Appropriations Chairman Gibson Armstrong, R-Lancaster.

The new fiscal year begins July 1 and lawmakers are working toward a budget agreement by then.

The current year's budget is \$27.2 billion.

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