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(Neb.)-Nebraska Lawmakers Say Tough Budget Talks Ahead

By: Dennis and Kathi Brown Posted at: 01/06/2013 07:44 AM

LINCOLN, Nebraska (AP) - Lawmakers will start their new session with Nebraska in better financial shape than two years ago, but now they're bracing for a fight over how to use the state's additional money.

The Legislature will face a projected \$195 million shortfall in the state's two-year budget when they convene Wednesday. That's a far cry from the nearly \$1 billion budget hole that lawmakers confronted in 2011, and pressure to cut costs have eased.

York Sen. Greg Adams, who is running unopposed for speaker, says he expects contentious debates over a proposal to expand Medicaid coverage. Lawmakers are also likely to debate funding for foster care services and the poor.

Republican Gov. Dave Heineman has signaled that he wants more tax cuts.