

PRESIDENT: The bill is advanced. LB 853, please.

CLERK: 853, Mr. President, offered by Senator Johanns. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 6 of this year, referred to the Government Committee, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill.

PRESIDENT: Senator Johanns, please. Excuse me, Senator Johanns, just a moment, please. (Gavel.) It's getting pretty noisy again. Senator Johanns, please.

SENATOR JOHANNS: Mr. Speaker, members, first of all there are two major sections of this bill. The first section of the bill, let me hasten to add, does not change what voters do or do not have to vote on in terms of approving projects. What it does do is it raises the limit that a county can spend on regular maintenance type things before it does have to go to a vote of the people, and in fact doubles the current limits. We heard from Douglas County who hasn't had an increase since 1971. We also heard from Sarpy County who talked about the fact that they had a leaky roof, and ended up having to split the project over two years in order to meet their limit, and they feel that it cost them more money because they had to do that. The second part of the bill relates to the provision that currently exists in the law where a county with no bonded indebtedness has the ability to levy 5.2 cents per \$100 of valuation for the purposes of building a jail or a courthouse. This does not change that in any. All it does, in the second part of the bill, is it clarifies that a county only needs to meet the bonded indebtedness test the first year that that levy goes into effect. The reason for this is during year two, three, four or whatever, the people may choose to vote bonded indebtedness, if an issue goes before a vote of the people they may vote in favor of that and that would put into question the levy. So all this does is clarify that that is a first year test. It does not increase the amount they can currently spend, nor does it increase the length of time for which they can spend it. It's a 5.2 cents per 100 for a maximum of 10 years, and that is what is there already. I urge your adoption.

PRESIDENT: Senator Schmit, your light is on, did you wish to speak?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Yes. I would like to ask a question. On