

April 5, 1994

LB 902

indicates that in 1990 the medium single-family home value in the State of Nebraska on average was 50,000 and again, the 35,000 is what we had for the...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...for the homestead exemption so we were way below for anywhere in this state what would be an average value for a home of 50,000. That was in 1990. Here four years later that has gone up significantly even beyond that. But at 50,000 statewide Omaha was at about 55,000 and Lincoln was almost 62,000, so we particularly had a severe problem here in Lancaster County. And by taking the 80 percent of average value you get away from that differential problem and you allow again to have that float and recognize the differences between counties. The biggest impact on the homestead exemption, again on the handout I've got is, there's 51,000 exemptions in the State of Nebraska so this bill, this issue we're dealing with affects 51,000 some homes. Forty-nine thousand some of those are for the elderly, the low income elderly, so that is the biggest hit. But we also affect obviously veterans and disabled as well are impacted, but the big focus has been on those that are elderly.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Time.

SENATOR WESELY: And again, I support the amendment.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Will.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I, too, rise in support of this amendment to LB 902. As has been explained, this amendment represents a lot of work that has been done by the Revenue Committee and by other interested people like Senator Wesely. I was involved in those discussions and I think that we've come up with a very effective vehicle here for improving the homestead exemption program in the State of Nebraska. I have always, since I've been in the Legislature, been a big advocate of the homestead exemption as a method for providing some equity on our property tax system. It obviously applies to residential property and I've always thought that residential property carries too big of the burden when it comes to the property tax distribution, especially when you're talking about people who are in a position that they can't afford property taxes as well as other people. And these include