

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR ABBOUD: ...maybe what we should be looking to is the actual levy that these residents are having to pay. Now in the Ralston School District, according to the numbers that have been provided by the Education Committee, Ralston is at a level of 1.73, \$1.73, and Westside is at \$1.29, \$1.29, which is about normal I...in making comparisons here. In looking at OPS, it's about \$1.43, so you have a variation as far as what that cost is. Papillion-LaVista is at \$1.30, which is awfully darn close to Westside here at \$1.29. So we're not talking about a big difference in the amount that is currently being funded. What you're talking about and what constituents talk to me about is saying...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Time.

SENATOR ABBOUD: ...how can you continue to take away state aid when we're paying the same level of property taxes as Papillion-LaVista, which has the same level of tax rate?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Abboud. Senator Jensen.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. I stand in support of Senator Abboud's amendment. The equalization/nonequalization formula that has been brought forth, and I do believe in equalization, I do believe that those that can should share their wealth with those who are...don't have the dollars, but also we do have a problem, and when school districts are really interested, when the citizens are interested in excellence in education, they are, in some cases, and I think this is one of them, where they are being penalized; where the citizens have decided that education is very important to them and they're willing to step forward and get involved and to expend the dollars but yet, because of that, they then become penalized. And then there are other districts who continually vote down bond issues, who do not get behind their schools, they are then rewarded for the fact that they have not stepped forward and tried to put an emphasis on education. And I think that's wrong and it's hard to come up with a proper formula, but I think that this would be one way to do that when we would lift that lid of 102 million and allow it to float so that it would be less penalizing to the schools that have certainly stepped