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think it is a sham to continue to try and talk about that we have got property tax relief in this state with this General Homestead Exemption, because it is not tax relief and it isn't, and we should not try and fool people by saying, well we've got this tax relief program and it is really taking care of the problem, or that it is in some way being effective in dealing with property tax problems. It isn't. It is not effective and it is not helpful at all, and I think it should be eliminated or it should be amended. It should be revised. In some way it should be made effective and it isn't now. What we do is we provide a general exemption. We provide about \$17.00 on the average across the state in property tax relief to individuals who are both rich and poor, to people who are both able to pay their taxes and those that are not. We don't distinguish between those who need relief and those who do not, and that is not a good tax relief program, I don't believe. This is a general exemption that does not particularly help those that need it, and does provide tax relief to those who don't need it, to those who are wealthy enough to not have to worry about \$17.00 in tax relief. And Senator Keyes and Senator Labeledz are right, \$17.00 or \$28.00 or whatever the figure may be...it varies across the state, can be a very important amount of money to individuals. I have seen it with the Homestead Exemption for the elderly. \$17.00 is a great amount of money to those on fixed incomes, on low incomes, and I absolutely agree that they deserve the tax relief that this program does provide, but at the same time we are trying to help those individuals we are providing tax relief to very wealthy people. We are providing tax relief to people who have no need for it and have no desire for it, and I have talked to a lot of individuals that...when I talked to them about this General Homestead Exemption, say, look I don't need it, what's \$17.00 to me. Take it and give it to somebody who could use it. But they still claim it and they still get it, and I think that is a waste of tax dollars. That is a waste of state tax dollars to try and provide tax relief in such an open-ended fashion. It is not effective. It is not helpful, and I think we have got a problem that could have a better solution. When we provide property tax relief and we come up with these different proposals, there are better ways to provide it than what we have got now. So let's save that four million dollars. Let's turn it into something more useful and more beneficial to this state, and let's not try and fool the property taxpayers in this state by saying we have got a General Homestead Exemption that will deal with your problem, because it isn't. I would strongly urge your support for this amendment. Thank you.

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