

as it should be or could be and those problems are very near and dear to me because I have tried to deal with those. Now I want to say that not everyone has and this Legislature has not always made it easy to try to protect the property tax base but this Legislature has been generous enough to allow Omaha to continue to tax itself with the additional half-cent. Now that half-cent now, when it was first implemented we only needed between three and five million dollars of the full eight million dollars that it would raise per year. Now it raises nearly ten million dollars and Omaha needs nine million dollars from that. Our property tax base has not grown more than 2.6 percent in those three years and it is not going to grow by more than that. We are going to find that if this bill is not passed, with 33 votes the people of the City of Omaha can vote for this or reject it, we are going to find that we are going to be in a major fiscal crisis in Omaha. It is not a minor thing and I used to argue against the bill originally. Three years ago I ended...

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have one minute.

SENATOR NEWELL: ...up voting for it but I argued that it was not based on the premise what the city said. It wasn't because of the police and the fire department's problems. It was because of a lack of property tax growth because we don't have the tax base, because we haven't protected the tax base. That is the real issue here, and if the people of Omaha should not vote for this, if this bill should pass and the people of Omaha rejects this, the gnashing and mashing of teeth will be tremendous because, in fact, Omaha is indeed in a real bind. Let me address very quickly Senator Landis' problems. Senator Landis, we have not, to my knowledge, as a delegation and individuals have not talked to me about the deals on the vet school. Now that is not to say they haven't been proposed but there hasn't been any deals that I know of on the vet school and I would hope that you and other members of the Lincoln delegation, who has traditionally opposed this bill, would think about what kind of position you are putting people like myself in in relationship to the vet school. If you, in fact, want us to vote our conscience, then I think you should look at that...

SPEAKER MARVEL: Your time is up.

SENATOR NEWELL: ...issue as it is and not try to tie it, as others have tried to tie it. Thank you.

SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair recognizes Senator Schmit and then