

I recognize the unique problems of Omaha and I have stood on this floor and supported you time after time. I supported you when you wanted to do things for Omaha that were in fact foreign to the interest of my own area because I recognized the impact of the metropolitan city upon the rest of the state and the necessity for maintaining a strong metropolitan city and I do not think that that should be maintained at the expense of the rest of the cities of the State of Nebraska nor the rest of the State of Nebraska. That is why I proposed a bill which would have given Omaha more dollars, more dollars, for a lesser total tax rate than what you have here today. Under my bill, 524, as I proposed the amendments, Omaha would have had a maximum tax rate in the three and three-quarters percent and possibly only three and a half percent and would have taken home just as many dollars. I suggest you go back and have the people of Omaha vote on that, Senator Newell, and I know you are willing to do that, that they will buy that, and I don't really know, Senator Newell, what the action of this body would have been had the bill gotten to the floor but it was a bill that was so fair for Omaha that I would have had a hard time explaining it in Valley, Nebraska. The overall tax rate would have been less. Omaha's tax collections would have been equal or superior. In addition to that every other single city in the State of Nebraska would have been compensated by an equivalent amount, but because Omaha has a unique problem, I was willing to buy them out at a rate greater than the rest of the cities in the State of Nebraska. I only saw one thing. I saw an editorial that says...spoke at great length about LB 524 and said, "Be Careful" about four times. I told some of my colleagues on the floor there ought to be a "Be Careful" button down here for us to push because it seems that is the only advice they could give us. My principal concern today with the advancement of the bill as is, is that if we advance that bill, we will be setting the stage not for one and a half percent but for two percent, two and a half, three percent. Eventually the city sales tax in Omaha will exceed that of the State of Nebraska. I think as Senator Higgins has said, there is some economy that can be achieved in Omaha. There are some responsibilities that we as a state have to Omaha and we are glad to listen to those.

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have thirty seconds.

SENATOR SCHMIT: We are glad to help with those but I think that we should not try to isolate Omaha from the rest of this state. Other cities have problems also. Lincoln has their own problems. The first class cities have their problems. The second class cities and villages also have their problems. Under my proposal, they would have all been