

in an effective way with the multiple problems that Douglas County has. I would like to explain for just a brief moment some of the differences and some of the problems between the way this bill will be applied in Douglas County and Lancaster County for the edification of this body. Because I know that there is a grave interest in this bill, actually wish there was a grave interest in this bill. But, I think I need to explain, for those few that are listening, what is the intention, what is the purpose and what is right in this regard because there are some of you that will disregard personalities. There are some of you that will disregard the intensity of feeling that obviously is displayed over this and try to look at the issue. If you do that, I'll win. So I'm going to appeal to your better instincts and try to argue this issue on its merits. The proposal is simply this: Douglas County has traditionally had the kind of growth plan that says if you can buy land anywhere in the county you can build on it with a few, a very few exceptions. So what basically happens is that someone holds...decides that they are going to wait for growth to come around them to raise the price of their land. In so doing, they have this tremendous incentive of a low interest rate and the fact as Senator Warner indicated Douglas County Commissioners have not been the most stringent in their interpretation of the law, which is something we are trying to deal with in this regard. Basically they hold that land for as long as they can since there is no real incentive and no real penalty if they sell it. Now Lancaster county, and that basically is speculation which encourages more sprawl, more outward development etc., and creates tremendous cost to the people of the City of Omaha who eventually have to annex, provide services, streets and sewers, roads, etc., etc., to this area. Now Lancaster County has a totally different sort of program. Lancaster County says we are only going to allow growth that is contiguous to the City of Lincoln and they basically say you can build anywhere on periphery but not outside of that. So therefore they make the property dear, they make the land dear, the additional cost are there automatically. So the additional two percent that we are talking about in terms of back taxes going back for a full five years, which is not a long period of time, is really something that can easily be made up in the purchase price, where in Douglas County it is in fact not quite the same because Douglas County does not say that the land is dear, they say you can go anywhere in the county and with very few exceptions allow you to build on it. So we are really not penalizing Lancaster County and