

technical community colleges to be exceeded in those areas which cannot using their current existing tax base raise more than...meet the 7 percent which is under the current spending lid proposal, and this does allow them to exceed their mill levy limitation and it does allow them to meet...raise their expenditures to that level of 7 percent. And we are not sure what this Legislature is going to do with the spending limitation, and so I guess perhaps this bill will have to be changed depending on how we deal with that. But I have to stand and oppose LB 320 unless the amendment which I propose is adopted. What this amendment does, this amendment says that that special tax status for the Western Technical Community College area will be limited to two years. It says that they will be allowed to exceed their current 2 1/2 mill authority for two years only. Now this is a compromise on my part because I do recognize that they have some funding difficulties in the Western Technical Community College area. I think they have had these funding difficulties for many years and I think they are going to continue to have them until we make some basic changes in the structure of the system. But I am not willing as a representative of the western area to allow the people of western Nebraska to be forced to pay higher property taxes for the support of vocational and technical education and for the other community programs than for the rest of the state is. It is wrong, in my opinion, that we pay property taxes for vocational education, postsecondary education any way, but it is clearly wrong to say to the people in western Nebraska, you pay more than 2 1/2 mills to support the technical community colleges and those of you who live in the five other areas of the state, you pay your 2 1/2 mills. That's wrong, and I don't like the philosophy of it at all. But as a compromise I am willing to allow that to persist for two years until we can take a look at a means to achieve some equity. Without this amendment and some other amendments, I will have to oppose LB 320 very vigorously. The philosophy is wrong to force people in western Nebraska to pay more property tax for the support of their technical community colleges than statewide. Now Senator Nichol and I disagree on this issue. He, I guess, is willing to allow them to pay higher property taxes in western Nebraska, perhaps forever. But I am not, and I hope that you will join me and limit this special taxing status of the western area to two years.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Nichol.