

situation we are in. Now if they had not cut the tax rate by two percent, we would have been in a situation that did a couple of things. First off we probably could have afforded without any doubt whatsoever this state aid increase and realize for sure that there wouldn't be any problem with the tax rates. Also we probably could have kept the food sales tax credit up there to the \$3 increase which the Governor again has vetoed and which I think we will discuss in a few minutes. So my feeling is this. The Governor has talked about tax rate reductions. He has claimed all the credit for it, but when we talk about other types of property tax relief and other tax relief, such as food sales tax credit and such as the state aid proposal, well, it is the Legislature that should be taking the bows, that we are the ones that have tried to provide property tax relief and we are the ones that are trying to provide food sales tax relief and I think that we should stand up and be proud of the fact that we have been the one to stand up for those sort of tax relief measures. And again, I would say that is something the people of the state want. I think they want property tax relief and I do think that they want to see food sales tax relief. Both of those issues can be done but they also have to realize that there is no free lunch anymore and I have done a poll where I contacted constituents in my district and I said, "The choice is this. Would you want your sales and income tax increased in order to reduce your property taxes? It is no other option, really. You are going to have to pay for it someday and would you be willing to do that?" And close to two-thirds of my district said "Yes, we are ready to face that tradeoff." And I think that that is something that most people, if they understand the circumstances, would agree to. So I rise in support of the \$20 million increase and I know that perhaps next year when election time comes around all those of us who supported as I did last year, as you recall, will use that as "big spender" type of campaign gimmick, and they will get out and they will use that against some of us who vote for this motion as overriding the Governor's veto and we are "big spenders" and we are the "bad guys". Well that is not the case at all. We are the ones that are trying to stand up tall and recognize the fact that the people of this state don't like the high property tax rates we have and that our income and sales tax rates probably can handle this increase in state aid without having to be adjusted, but if they do have to be adjusted, that is probably a tradeoff people will want to make. And so I think we ought to stand tall and support this amendment and support this motion to override the Governor's veto and I think the people of the state will benefit and thank you for it.