

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I want to rise in opposition to Senator Warner's motion to kill this constitutional amendment. I think the debate on the floor with respect to LB 672 both on General File and then on Select File, and this bill was amended on Select File, has been very good and this is a very simple ballot measure. All it does is it allows if passed, tax incremental financing to, in effect, be financed over a slightly longer period of time than is currently the case and in addition, it allows our communities to engage in rehabilitation projects as well as in acquisitional and redevelopment projects. Now you and I over the last twenty to thirty years have been watching the life of cities and we watched cities begin to decline usually from their center and the decline works outward and I know that we have all decried the basic destruction that is occurring day in and day out in our cities. And we've all asked ourselves, what kind of measures can we as individuals and we collectively as a Legislature take to at least either moderate the decline in the cities or in the alternative, reverse the trend. And one kind of measure that we have taken through the Constitution and through statutory implementation and finally through actual practice has been tax incremental financing of redevelopment projects. In fact we now have tax incremental financing money being used in the City of Omaha in its downtown area. We have tax incremental financing about to be used in the City of Lincoln in conjunction with the Cornhusker Hotel project and these are very valuable tools for our urban planners to use. In addition we have been using a lot of federal money which is drying up, for the purpose of rehabilitating houses. We have no state law that authorizes cities to use city money to rehabilitate properties. When the federal funds dry up, cities such as Omaha will be without authority to expend their dollars for rehabilitation programs. This constitutional amendment gives the City of Omaha and the City of Lincoln and other cities the authority to commit public dollars to rehabilitation projects and frankly, we need to conserve our assets and we conserve our assets through rehabilitation. This is a sound constitutional amendment. It is very useful in preserving and maintaining city structures. It is very useful in overcoming the effects of blight and decay and it should be advanced. I would ask all of you to rise to a person, in opposition to Senator Warner's motion.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Goodrich.

SENATOR GOODRICH: Mr. President, members of the body, I also rise in opposition to Senator Warner's kill motion and if you listened to Senator Warner's presentation this morning he refers to improvements on property such as homes which is covered by Home Improvement Loans, that type of thing. That is not the type of improvements that is being asked for or talked to or addressed in this particular bill. This particular bill deals with the rehabilitation and the