

levy a half cent sales tax. I hope the body will agree with that. If it doesn't, well that is the breaks of the game. I will understand but the motives involved are very significant to me. You can't coerce my vote or those of I believe of my colleagues or compel them by holding captive valuable, important, positive pieces of legislation. Thank you.

SENATOR NICHOL: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I haven't spoken on this bill to this point and I am going to be very brief, I hope, to express my opinion about it. I guess first I am surprised about Senator Sieck since he doesn't live that far from Lincoln, if he considered himself outstate. He can't be more than ten miles from the city but we will let him define what outstate Nebraska is. I don't know where his figures came from. I don't know why his concerns have arisen at this point. Senator Landis mentioned the possibility of retribution. I can't say whether that is a motivation or not but let me just say this. I have been a reluctant supporter of LB 591 when it was brought up last fall. I said I was leaning against it. What changed my mind is the fact that the bill allows for an increase in the city sales tax only through a vote of the people. That is the difference in my mind that allows me to vote for this bill even though I may not support the increase itself when it is on the ballot next November if it is placed on the ballot. I am a reluctant supporter for a number of different reasons. I opposed the Omaha city sales tax increase because of the concern I have for the base of tax support that our state needs to operate state government in our programs. I still am concerned about that state tax base. However, I have seen in this Legislature every year since I have been down here that efforts to try to have a better solution which I think would include a revenue sharing program along the line that Senator Schmit has been proposing. It makes more sense but doesn't get anywhere in this Legislature and so after seeing year in, year out failure to try and develop a program that has a state sharing revenues with local government so we wouldn't need a city sales tax, it only makes sense in my mind at this point to allow as an interim period this increased authority if the people would allow for it through a vote. The opinion polls that have come out in Lincoln show that there is opposition to the sales tax increase. I believe the figure is about 41% approval and 55% disapproval. Your support for LB 591 does not mean the city will increase its city sales tax. The people will decide that matter and because the issue will be up in November you will have a chance between now and then for the city, number one, to adopt its budget. Number two, the federal government will