

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, I want to talk specifically to some certain senators in here, to Senator Vard Johnson, to Senator Cal Carsten, to Senator Warner, to Senator Koch, to Senator Cullan, to Senator Howard Peterson, to Senator Higgins, to Senator Landis, Newell and Burrows and particularly Senator Fenger. Now all the rest of you too, but particularly those. Those senators have worked and have been intimately involved with the whole property tax issue over the years one way or another and this is a property tax issue. Let me explain. Every year for at least about twelve years now the Legislature has had a proposal on doing something for property tax relief, for example, our famous state aid to education plans, one thing and another. We were never able to get them passed or get anything effectively done even on the ballot because of one major reason. Omaha always came in at the last minute, their senators, and defeated them. Now why did Omaha do that? Because Omaha senators had a unique situation and that unique situation back throughout the years was that any change of the tax system they thought would jeopardize their one cent they already had if you made major changes in it and it would juggle up their financing of the schools. Omaha only became really interested, strongly interested in looking at the other side of the coin when an event happened in here and that event was we got concerned about equalization and when we put houses and property at pretty close to actual value in Omaha, Omahans overnight got massacred by property taxes themselves. In other words, they got put in the same position as a lot of others and that was when Omahans started seeing how bad and how hurtful that property tax is because they lost a lot of dollars on equalization, equalization out of that famous state aid fund. Now, how does this all relate? If we go ahead, in light of the additional money they are getting from the tax base under 816 and in light of the money they are getting under the additional half cent, and if we then extend that to all the other first class cities, you will create a condition, Senator Carsten and Senator Warner, where you will never be able to rewrite or deal with your property tax problems because you will never be able to put together the block of votes necessary. Why? Because Omaha will not want to rewrite that jeopardizes their own tax system there, their one and a half cent, and the primary class cities will not want to jeopardize it and it is a political fact that they will have enough senators all added together that you will not rewrite the tax system and you will not address the major property tax problem. It is for that reason that I say we send a signal, we've redone or are redoing the first major piece of the tax system in 816 and we're sending a signal in this bill then. We are saying, Omaha, get ready for a year from now because we are going to phase down your