

hung out there, if you will, to have as something that we can look at as time goes along. One of the problems I see, and I don't think many of us appreciate the problem that counties, in particular, with a mill levy limit have in facing some of the responsibilities that they have, and so it is easy to mandate programs there as has been the case over the years, much as the federal government is really doing to us at the state level, and then saying, now, we know better, you must do this kind of program, and it is up to you to figure out where the dollars come from. This is nearly one of those issues. We know that we need to have amount of care for the medically indigent. This is not the problem. The problem is how do we pay for many of these programs that are mandated, and this is one of those issues. Then we say, well, where is the state going to come up with the \$12 million, and I am simply submitting to you that as time goes along we are going to have to face many of these issues as we care for the elderly, as we try to support our education that should be done over the next five or 10 years, we are going to have to decide where are we going to have this money come from. Obviously, property tax has been talked about a lot in this session and it will be, but I think that we are going to have to recognize the fact we are going to have to increase the sales and income tax if we continue to put out these programs that we want, and from my viewpoint, we are going to have to figure out a way then to be sure that we don't...that we, I don't want to use the word "freeze" but we have got to do something to stop the property tax increase at the same time. So, as I voted for this to have it out there, I think it is we have got to recognize the burden we are putting on those entities that have a mill levy limit. They have nowhere to go. Then what are we going to do. So we need to keep in mind that we are going to have to be prepared to raise our own sales and income tax to do this. If that is what you want to do as we fund these programs, then I think we are going to have to be prepared to do it because I don't see any long-term surplus in our state treasury as we are facing it right now. We may have some extra funds right now but I don't see that they are sustainable. I think we need to keep the balance in mind and perhaps it is publicly time to state what some of our priorities are. Some way we need a forum, and I guess this is the place to state what or where are we going to put our emphasis, and perhaps we need to be talking about these issues each time they come up, and see if we can find that consensus before we come to May 24th and we work all night.