

gradually, for a lot of reasons, we keep expanding that. Each exemption, of whatever nature, whatever tax, seems to germinate another. In fact, I think you get two plans for every one seed that you plant. I suspect that we're going to...I think there is a very crucial policy issue that the Legislature needs to be concerned about because, if we are not careful, once you start the route of exemptions there is very little justification not to do another. And they will continue to expand, as they already have. Broad tax policy dictates, time and time again, the concept of broad-based low rate, keeping your budgets within reason is what is best for economic climate, it's best for government services, it's best for the citizens throughout the state. And as tempting and as justified as each exemption is, as we individually view them, collectively we are talking about deterioration of a tax base. One of the lessons I can remember being told, I don't know that I learned it all that well, but many years ago when you try to do social programs for tax programs it is virtually impossible to be definitive enough to target the real thing that you're trying to get at. As I've been listening to discussions just on the specifics of the bill this morning, obviously, that is a problem with, or at least a concern with some of you, that you can't target it exactly the way you want to do it. I would suggest, if it's to help students, there probably are far less problems trying to help a student through the appropriation side of a...

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR WARNER: ...program than the probability of not doing what you ought to do or want to do on the tax side. It's just very difficult to accomplish. But that really isn't my...I'm not concerned about 140 in that respect. I just want to caution...hope that you give some thought that 10 years from last night there will be a another ETV program in which people again will appear and comment on how we narrow the income tax base as we had done the property tax base, to some extent the sales tax base. And then we'll begin to wonder why are we having all these inequities in the tax system, why are we disgruntled with the tax system. I would suggest that where you start, where you start to have and retain equity in a tax system is minimizing exemptions, in whatever the form of taxation is. So I think there is a very serious issue, not with 140 but with a lot of bills, and that is the broad tax policy of are we going to narrow the income tax base, as we have the property tax base, and to some extent the sales tax base, or have we learned from