

raise \$50 million to appropriate the state aid to education is not...it's spending half a cent sales tax I don't think we need to raise...spend...to raise, and it's spending \$50 million that will not provide property tax and will just be a one-year simple hold harmless. Coincidentally, I didn't plan it this way, coincidentally, the School Finance Review Commission issued its interim report this morning which is on your desk and I'd appreciate it if you would all take a look at page 8 of that, the goals and recommendations of that Finance Commission. What we're saying is in order to accomplish property tax relief, you are going to have to do something a lot more significant than half a penny of sales tax. Fifty million dollars won't do it. You're going to have to...you're going to have to utilize an income tax, combination of income tax and sales tax, in all probability, to reduce sales tax, to reduce property tax by as little as 15 percent. It's going to take almost \$180 million. That's not chicken feed. It's going to take a lot of intestinal fortitude, guts, honesty, gumption, all of those terms to get that done. And if we're going to really do anything on property taxes, we're going to have to do that type of thing. What I'm doing with this particular amendment...attempting to do, is to say if you're going to marry property tax relief and teachers' salaries in this bill, you can do it and you don't have to raise a penny sales tax to do it. I think, from what I just heard from Mr. Brown and my legal counsel, that we may not have the amendment drafted quite the way we need to so I'm probably going to withdraw this. What I'm going to try to do, Senator Moore, and get your light all ready because you're going to stand up and speak strongly in favor of this, I hope, I'm going to suggest that we change the Schmit amendment to a one-half cent sales tax, that we eliminate the property tax relief portion of this as the bill came out of committee, originally, and say we don't want to marry these two concepts together and let the body choose if they think that a half cent sales tax is needed to fund the teacher pay increase portion of the bill and keep that portion separate. Senator Crosby, the other day, made a good point that we brought a bill to the floor, she has co-signed it, Senator Lynch signed the bill, to talk about raising teachers' salaries and 90 percent of our time debating the bill has been over this property tax relief component. I don't think we ought to marry the two concepts. I think probably the purer method is to offer an amendment along that line and that's what I'm going to be proposing here in just a moment. Because we may not have this amendment drafted the way we would like it, I would like to withdraw this amendment at this time.