

be done to reduce property taxes is a substantive tax shift, number one; and, number two, it's got to go on a revenue base that is going to grow as the need for property tax dollars grows. Now, having said that, I can support certain things going on this session that I think can be funded within the reserve that we have, the increased revenues that are coming in.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR WITHEM: The Chizek bill I'm a co-sponsor of. The Governor's bill I'm not as crazy about, but it's there as a possibility. Increasing state aid out of the revenues is another possibility, any number of possibilities that are out there to deal with a hold-harmless property tax this session. But to say you've solved property taxes by raising a half cent sales tax is ridiculous. You haven't done that. And I prefer to save my increases in the tax rate for when we can do something substantive. Those of you that attended my...the little briefing we had from the school finance review commission I hope were convinced we're on somewhat the right direction with this. I think we are. If you've got other avenues that you think will do a better job of sustainable property tax relief, we need to talk about them. But to say you've raised sales tax by half a cent, keep in mind that's a half cent sales tax you're not going to be able to raise later on when it comes to the time of really doing something.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Time.

SENATOR WITHEM: I think you're really deluding yourself and wasting your time. I urge a no vote on the Schmit amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Nelson. Senator Nelson. Senator Lynch. Excuse me. Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, this has been one of my reservations all along. I definitely have great reservations about raising any sales tax. We've raised income tax to the people. If you go home, it's not teachers salaries that they're talking about, it's the general economy. A lot of people are very glad to have a job and appreciate that job. It's not...there are a few Class I districts, of which I very much admit the salary's probably too low. What is being proposed in this bill is the fact that I have a few figures here for you. As you know I figure a little bit further than...maybe