

constitute a separate and distinct class of property for purposes of taxation. And, secondly, the really dangerous part, which most of us have not paid much attention to, "for a different method," the method, ladies and gentlemen. The method does not mean that you apply it to the value. It can mean how many oak trees are growing on the farm, how many miles it is from town, how many miles it is from the Capitol. There are many, many variations that...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...can be applied to that description. Now some are going to say, well, the Farm Bureau says this is great. Ladies and gentlemen, the Farm Bureau said 271 was great. They said Amendment 4 was great. They are farmers like I am. They have no more experience, in many cases, than I do, and in some instances, I may have a little more. But the point I want to make is this, let us not fall into the trap, let us not fall into a trap of our own making. If you go this route, do not provide an open invitation to widespread dissension, not only between the state taxing authorities, but the various entities at the local level. I have another amendment which follows and I will just briefly outline that. That provides for a specific type of taxes, not less than forty-five, not more than eighty. The reason for that is simple, because even if you adopt the first amendment, ladies and gentlemen, it does not prevent a future Legislature from valuing farmland at more, at more than other classes of property. Let me explain to you what I think the problem might be. We have all heard of the terrible threat to Nebraska's groundwater because of the use of chemicals, and because of irrigation, in some instances. In my estimation, most of it overblown, but nonetheless, suppose a future Legislature not agriculturally oriented were to say all of us must bear the burden of cleaning up Nebraska's groundwater, why then should we allow the farmers to contaminate that groundwater and make us clean it up at our expense. Let us tax their farmland if it is irrigated and they use chemicals and fertilizers at twice or three times the amount of its actual value to discourage, to discourage that. Ladies and gentlemen, do not say it is far-fetched. In the 20 years I have been here, I have seen this Legislature do a 180 degree turn many, many times, and it can happen in this instance. Do not place American agriculture and Nebraska farmers in that kind of a situation. But I want to emphasize again, and I would like to ask, I would like to ask Senator Wehrbein. Senator Wehrbein,