

time, I will mention that there is a pass-out...there is a leaflet which discusses this subject. The community colleges have been...were created only about 25 years ago and there have been a number of changes regarding the financing of the community colleges. Fundamentally, they rely on property taxes and the community colleges set the amount of revenue within a lid that has been established by the Legislature. In times there were problems in various areas and in 19...early 1980s the western areas, the low population areas did not have sufficient property evaluation to really sustain their own college needs, their teaching needs, their physical plant needs. And the Legislature, in 1984, permitted those community college areas with a population of 150,000 or less to be able to have a two and a half cent increase in taxing authority. Now, at that time, at that time, the lid was nine cents for all community colleges. This permitted those with 150,000 or less to be able to tax up to 11 1/2 cents per 100 property tax evaluation. Now since then, there have been some increases in those lesser populated areas, not necessarily up to the...clear up to the limit, but there has been a lawsuit. Now this brings about, why is this legislation necessary? Now the western area is now being sued under the contention that the current statute is class legislation, and this is true. In addition, the suit was expanded to challenge the entire funding system as violating the current community college statutes prohibiting excessive taxation. We have already dealt with the second half of that lawsuit by advancing LB 143. That was Senator Baack's bill. I believe it was last week that we advanced that. It was originally LB 845 and then it was amended into 143. LB 143 was gutted. Now that establishes a community college equalization fund, if you recall. So we have started this course and really my bill, LB 1050, is a companion to that bill. LB 1050 will take care of the second part of the lawsuit. Now if this suit is successful, which it probably will be, and, as you know, these class action suits have been highly successful, the western area would lose 460,000 and the Mid-Plains area, that would be North Platte, 106,000; and if this were retroactive, I don't know how much money that would be. It would get into the millions. Now since the Legislature permitted this, they become responsible part of this lawsuit and you could expect those community college areas which have a problem such as that, if the suit is lost and are obligated to pay, they would simply be coming to the Legislature and seeking the amount of funds necessary to cover this. Now since this bill would give all of the community colleges the top limit of, that is we had nine