

March 16, 1990

LB 1229

LR 11

building, but that building is also being financed through tax increment financing by the city, and if Warren Oil is going to go away at their location at 13th and Leavenworth, they are going to be torn down. Leavenworth Street is going to then become a through street to 8th Street, which is the gates of the ConAgra project. Now I don't have any problem with that. I think that is probably a fine thing for the city to do, but they are currently using taxpayers' money through street bond proposals that have been endorsed by the voters and they are using that to do exactly what I think Senator Scofield rightly says needs to be done in some of the smaller communities, and that is why my amendment does not attack the integrity of the proposal that she emphasizes and did emphasize in front of the committee last year with the introduction of LR 11, and then the accompanying bill in LB 1229, not only over the summer, through interim studies with Urban Affairs Committee, but before the committee this year when it was introduced. What I deal with is the amount of money that we are currently spending in the City of Omaha in this way. Maybe we are being unconstitutional in our approach. Maybe what we are doing is totally without any statutory or constitutional merit, but I don't think so, because if it was, I doubt that the city would be doing it. I doubt that Douglas County would dump a matching \$11.5 million into that same Riverfront Project. I am not opposed to the Riverfront Project. What I am saying is is that that single project alone in the last year, about 18 months, has...we have been able to raise through basically a quasi city entity, the Development Foundation, Omaha Development Foundation, the City of Omaha and Douglas County, nearly \$85 million for this purpose, and we have done it without the constitutional authority that Senator Scofield would allow for other parts of the state. All I do is strike out cities of the metropolitan class through my amendment so that we can go on doing our business without very likely, I mean the possibility is there that one could say if the argument were to be made that we would now be limited to the \$3 million cap that the accompanying LB 1229 would put into place. I know we don't want to do that in the City of Omaha, and I am sure that we can continue to do what we are presently doing, and that is bringing these people in, using the foundation to buy, then the city condemn, the foundation tear down, and then turn over to the city, deed to the city, give title to the city these properties that then can be financed through tax increment financing for these businesses, these companies that have been brought in and put into business in Omaha through a method that currently, from m