

living in rental housing. I don't think it's a legitimate or sincere concern. I think that that concern should be there, but I see it on the part of the Governor as pure politics. Well, as we try and respond, though, nevertheless to that concern and to the legitimate aspect of the policy involved here, we are finding some difficulty in how we accomplish that goal. Nevertheless, I think that this proposal is one that accomplishes, as best as we can in the short time we've had to work on it, the idea of trying to provide some assistance, some relief to low income rental families. The cost of the proposal is, as Senator Schimek talked about, about \$5 million, a modest sum in light of the two hundred some million dollars we're talking about under this legislation. It would bring some equity to the problems involved and I think is the fair way to go. I do believe that the arguments that will be coming forward, dealing with the constitutional problems involved here, are legitimate. But I do think that the Attorney General is wrong. Here's the basic concept, what they're saying is because we have a uniformity clause in our Constitution dealing with the assessment of property, then we can't turn around and provide...

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...property tax relief, other than in a uniform, across-the-board fashion. We can't single out renters, we can't single out low income individuals and provide them relief, outside of the homestead exemption, which is expressly granted in the Constitution. However, I feel that that is too narrow a view of the Constitution. It talks about the assessment, uniform assessment of property, it doesn't talk about the Legislature and our ability to use the income tax or the sales tax to relieve property taxes for individuals in need of that relief in a targeted fashion. And so I simply feel that at some point we need to test that concept and recognize that we need to be able to deal with particular problems in property tax relief, that there are people out there that need assistance, like these renters, that need to have targeted assistance, and ought not be bound by an interpretation of the Constitution that I think is far too narrow for the circumstances we're dealing with here. So, I, for one, feel that this is a good amendment. I appreciate the good work of Senator Schimek in drafting it and trying to work with myself and others interested in it, and that this is a good step forward and would alleviate some of the concern of some of the citizens of this state who have expressed their desire to see renters have some relief under this