

Withem argued, about how we fund our schools is not equitable, that we're not dealing with that problem, and that is appropriately the focus of the bill. But, when you shift to the income and sales tax, you're dealing with regressive changes, unless you recognize some of the implications. The sales tax is thought of as a regressive tax, one that all people pay, rich and poor, and it's not a progressive, not a tax that is thought of in the fairest fashion. The income tax is thought of as more progressive, more fair. The problems we have had in that income tax over the years, particularly with the changes that were adopted in 773, three years ago, have caused a lessening of the progressivity, and an increase in the regressivity of that tax. So, what Senator Schimek and I are saying is, we need to respond to that, that we're going to be shifting off the property tax and onto the sales and income tax, and there are going to be low income renters out there getting nothing out of it, other than higher sales and income taxes. Now, these people that we're talking about are 15,000 and less in income, primarily. So we're talking about very low income individuals. These are folks that can't afford to buy a home, can't afford to own property, that are out there living in rental situations. And we're trying to say for those low income individuals, no, it's not fair to shift a higher burden on you without some sort of an attempt to relieve their tax burden, some attempt to try and recognize the need for progressivity in the tax system. So, I, for one, recognize some of the arguments against this. I still feel that we need to adopt the amendment, but I do think some of those arguments against it are not legitimate, and I would ask you to not support those arguments. But this amendment is needed, it addresses a particular need, it focuses in on low income renters, and I would ask your support for it. And I would give the rest of my time to Senator Schimek.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Lynch, please, followed by Senator... I'm sorry, excuse me, I'm sorry. You have two and a half minutes left.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. Thank you, Senator Wesely. I guess I, too, would like to respond to Senator Moore. Senator Moore, wherever you are, this is a legitimate interest. This is a legitimate issue. One-third, approximately one-third of the taxpayers in this state are renters and not only does this bill not address their needs, but the bill that we passed last year did not address their needs, and I don't think that the income tax bill