

March 11, 1992

LB 1063

LR 219

The Moore amendment, I think the people of the state could understand it and I hope the amendment will be accepted and I'll give the rest of my time to Senator Elmer.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Elmer.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Senator Rogers, Madam President, members, I'll be very brief. This amendment makes sense. If we want to let the people of the State of Nebraska exercise their vote with foreknowledge of what it would do. Many of you in here, along with me are great fans of one of our early presidents, Tom Jefferson, and I think he said it very well when talking about whether or not the people should be allowed to vote on something. This amendment will allow people to vote on something and have a choice. Thomas Jefferson said if you feel that the citizen is not enlightened enough to exercise his franchise with a wholesome discretion, then it's not for us to take that right from him, but to educate his discretion with education. It is not our right to take that choice away. Please support Senator Moore's amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator. Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Madam Chairman and members, as I look up in the balcony and see the students in that balcony I suspect that they probably have a better concept of what we are not doing than what we are doing. What we are not doing is to place before the people if we do not pass the Moore amendment is a document which cannot be understood and which cannot be voted upon intelligently by all the people in the same perspective. The Moore amendment at least is clear and simple. It is more specific of course than the proposal which I offered which said very plainly let the Legislature do whatever they darn well please, but at least in the instance of my proposal and the Moore proposal the public will know exactly what they are doing. I really believe that, and I'm going to incur the wrath of many of you, but I really believe that the constitutional amendment, 219CA, and very frankly as Senator Withem says, the accompanying language in LB 1063 is designed to trap the people into throwing out all personal property tax exemptions. There can be no other result. If you take the rural people and they know a trap when they see one, they're not likely to vote for it and if you offer it to the homeowner a chance for substantial reduction in their real estate taxes, what would any reasonable person do particularly in light of the substantial increases they have