

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. Chairman and members, this amendment, as I said earlier, would give the people the opportunity to vote for or against taxation of personal property. It is a clear cut amendment. It is one which is simple, definitive and noncontradictory. It is the type of language which I believe ought to be offered to the people. The people will understand what they are doing. If, in fact, this amendment is adopted, we will know that the people have very clearly decided in favor of exemption of personal property. As I pointed out, there is a risk involved for those of us who want personal property exempted from taxation because if they say no, then this Legislature has a green light to proceed full throttle forward and tax personal property as they see fit. My concern is that the present amendment does not give the people that clear cut choice. I believe the people are entitled to that kind of a choice and we are not giving it to them. It is amazing to me that in this body members have told me several times that they wish they could have supported this amendment or that amendment, but that they had made a commitment and had locked themselves in and were unable to switch. I made that mistake once back in 1969. I never made it again. I left my options open. No matter how strongly I supported a bill or opposed a bill, I always left my options open in the event that amendments came along that made a bill acceptable to me or unacceptable. I have changed my position dramatically on some issues that are of great importance to this body and to the people of Nebraska over the years, based oftentimes on arguments on this floor. Anytime that we close our minds and ears to arguments that are made on this floor, we limit the representation of the people. We should not do that. If we are going to be dictated by a small cadre of individuals whether they are from inside or outside, it is an error. Those individuals who have been contacted by their constituents and by other constituents ought to give those people a hearing. There have been some people who have come to me and asked me to support 219CA as it is drafted. I have listened to those people and listened to their arguments and many of those arguments are good. Many of those arguments are emotional and eloquent. My own conviction remains the same, but I have accepted the validity of many of those arguments and from a personal standpoint, from a personal financial standpoint, I, my family and the people I represent would probably be better off to buy 219CA, if it passed, than to have the entire personal property, inventory stay on the tax rolls. But I believe it is the wrong direction to go and I suspect strongly that in years to come, if we reverse...