

livestock, machine, farm machinery. And so my inclination is to be supportive to consider going back to those exemptions, but not before we consider other issues, not before we take a look at the sort of things we haven't looked at, and I am specifically talking here about the homestead exemption and some of the other things that those of us in the urban areas have brought up before, that our homeowners are crying out for help and assistance, that our homeowners are having to pay too much property taxes. The burden has been shifted to our homeowners away from others, and this clearly indicates how big a shift we are talking about. Twenty percent more in taxes now being paid because of what action was taken by this Legislature two decades ago, 20 percent more statewide. A significant amount of taxes the homeowners are bearing as a result of that decision. Maybe we will come back and decide that that is the right thing to do, and we, I think, in fact, need to take the time to make that decision but, nevertheless, we ought to review it without haste. We ought to review it with great consideration and deliberation because, in my view, it is significant what we are given the opportunity to do here once again. And so I, for one, am not blindly going to go along with the proposal to amend the Constitution. I am voting against the advancement of it. I think a clear signal has to be sent that many of us, that at least ten of us are not willing to go along with the proposal at this time. And the reason isn't that we aren't willing to consider all our options, but rather that those options are not being considered right now by some of you who...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...support this amendment but aren't willing to talk about some of the other concerns that we have had. I remember fighting over LB 84 as some of us looked at a homestead exemption, a way to use that money, and we could have provided for homeowners hundreds of dollars in tax relief. Instead, we frittered it away with an across-the-board tax relief program that was eaten up by local subdivisions. Nobody saw any tax relief. Taxes went up locally, caused a big mess that led to LB 1059, and in my view was a mistake because the rural interests were not willing to consider a homestead exemption. They didn't want to give that sort of relief to homeowners, and I will never forget that as we debate this issue, that other time when we could have had a chance to help them, there wasn't a whole lot of help coming from our rural friends. Well, now our rural friends are suggesting to their urban colleagues that