

November 11, 1992 LB 1

didn't have taxes to talk about and how fair some people are treated than others, we wouldn't have anything to talk about at all this morning. But I'd like to maybe remind you of a couple of things. We probably have a system, and we know we have a system that's unfair to some and gracious to others. Without going into all the details, it's not a Republican or a Democratic issue, as many Republicans and probably more than Democrats caused the kind of a tax system we have to exist in Nebraska right now. But if it's farmers against farmers, and big business against small business, and homeowners against others, why don't we just do this next year, rather than worrying about trying to fix something that might be as screwed up as everybody says it, as unfair as they say it is, as stupid as they say it is, why don't we just go back to 1970 and 1976, and I mean this, just throw all of the exemptions out, even including ones that were just recently implemented like 775, and have everybody pay the same tax, whoever they are, wherever they live, whatever size business they might be. That would be certainly interesting, wouldn't it. And then have this legislative body try to develop a system that's fair after that, because if everybody pays the same tax as everybody else, it's obviously fair. What would happen to the homeowner who, all of a sudden, realizes that they can pay because everybody is paying their fair share, probably 60 percent of what they were paying in the past. And what about that business ag, small or large, company that paid more. They would say, I didn't realize I was getting such a break. But if you really want to fix it, let's not try to do it on a piecemeal basis, like we've been arguing and discussing, even with LB 1, which I intend to support because we need to do something now. To do nothing would be, I think, irresponsible on our part. But on the other hand, just think about that. Nobody probably wants to do that, and nobody wants to think about doing that, but why not? This body started it back in 1970 when they had all that money coming in from sales and income tax that they didn't have before, they said, hey, we found a way to spend it, we won't give it back to taxpayers on an equal and fair basis, we'll just give it to a certain group of people, and they took care of themselves. Then in '76 they totally exempted what they partially exempted in '70. So the point is we caused this mess. And it's not Republican, and it's not Democrat, but what we can do to fix it is to probably eliminate those 14 billion, \$14 billion worth of exemptions that exist out there. That's \$300 some million worth of taxes that we're not collecting is what's causing the problem today. And you can argue fairness and equity all day long, and