

SENATOR ABBOUD: Madam President, colleagues, I think there's a lot of confusion about LB 137 and the consequences of enacting this bill. Partly, the concern that I have and a number of my constituents have the same concern, is that when the valuations, at least in the past, when valuations have gone up so have their taxes, and their levy has not been reduced proportionately. Now the last time this issue...I assume every member in the body has had to face this issue in their counties, but it's kind of varied on each county as to when this change in valuation has taken place, depending upon the perspective of their local assessor. The last time this really was an issue in Douglas County was back in '85 and 1986, and at the time the valuations increased and some of the levies didn't drop proportionately so that you had a revenue neutral approach in valuation, and I think that's a concern among a number of my constituents that we will see a reduction in that levy so that their taxes won't go up. Now there's been a couple of things that have changed since then. In '86, I introduced a bill that I thought dealt with this particular problem and it was a bill that was enacted by this Legislature. It was LB 172, in the 1986 session, and at that time...it's in the Nebraska statutes under 77-1602, and the law is still there, and it calls for a reduction in the levy when evaluation increases. And that apparently has been interpreted to mean different things to the local political subdivisions and, in their wisdom, they have chosen, apparently some of them have chosen to disregard the law and they have kept their levies up. At the same time, we've had a great deal of controversy about this valuation process that has taken place across the state, so I can understand the concern among a number of the members when they feel that, well, this is a very isolated problem, it only affects certain counties in the state because we've gone ahead and raised our valuations, so the problem that you face in your county is not a concern. The second issue, which has changed, has been the lid process that we put local subdivisions in under 1059. And I'm not sure what...what impact the lids have on the change in the valuation. If we change the valuation, do the levies get reduced proportionately so that the subdivisions don't go up above their lids which we've imposed on them for at least through this year? This may be a major issue next year. I don't know if it will be or not, but it could be an issue this year. I...there's just a lot of questions that are unanswered by this piece of legislation, and a number of my constituents are concerned that their taxes are going to go up as a result of the actions of the