

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Thank you, Madam President, members. This is really a very simple bill. It follows in the wake of a bill that Senator Bernard-Stevens introduced last year and we passed. This deals with a form that is filed with the county clerk's office and the county assessor's office and the Nebraska Department of Revenue when a deed is recorded at the courthouse, it's called a form 521. It gives you information about the identity and the address of the parties. It gives you the value and a description of the property. Obviously the value is on the instrument primarily for use by the county assessor. It's also reviewed by the Nebraska Department of Revenue. That is also pertinent information for other people who want to use those records for appraisals, for example. It would be useful information for people who want to know whether their property is being assessed at a proper value for tax purposes based on sales of their neighbor's property. Last year Senator Bernard-Stevens' bill opened up those forms, those 521 forms to real estate appraisers. I guess we should have been a little bit more perceptive at the time and recognized that we may as well have just gone ahead and opened it up to everyone. It damage the public interest in any way. In fact, I think it may promote the public interest in allowing people better access to the true consideration paid for real estate. The forms will be used, would not jeopardize the information which would have to remain confidential on the form 521s and that information is the social security number of the parties involved. The other aspect that I might note is that there would be perhaps some cost at the local political subdivision level as people begin to request form 521s, but I would not expect that to be significant.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Madam Speaker. I was going to rise first of all and say I'm not going to support the bill because Senator Wickersham is the only one in the whole world that wanted this. (Laugh.) No pro or con. But I did ask a question. Is this...some people tend to be a little bit secretive about how much land costs and transfers. And I've had people deny my asking what the property had been sold for and so forth. Does this speak to that issue, in general?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Wickersham.