

April 12, 1995

municipalities must be separately treated. But the process, if you look at the handout that is entitled restructuring public services in Nebraska, it lists three goals, and the goals are the order in which I would anticipate that this would proceed. And the first is looking at restructuring of both local and state government services. And it is arranged in a variety of ways. Next goal would be reducing the use of property tax to finance those public services, and that can range from total elimination to replacing some of those revenues by other sources, to shifting to another governmental subdivision such as perhaps state government. And then the third goal is to restructure state aid as well as we now know it in a variety of ways. And the last thing that you see that one possible, in fact probable consequence is that there would be a need for some additional collected revenue if all of this was put into effect. That's the last resort. But realistically we all know that that, at some point, would become a consideration. What I think the Revenue Committee envisions happening, if you will introduce the resolution, allow the introduction, is that we tentatively plan to hold a public hearing on the proposal on the afternoon of the first of May of this year. I do not necessarily anticipate, in fact I do not anticipate that that will then be brought before the committee yet this session but rather would be something that would be discussed in the form that it has at that time next session, but in any event to be placed on the ballot in November of 1996. But during that interim period, between now and the next session, it would be our goal that we begin to explore and discuss and formulate a variety of alternatives, some of which are in this handout. But that is not certainly all-inclusive. But we begin the dialogue and the discussion that I believe is necessary for the citizens across the state in order to address this issue in any kind of a rational way. I think that public discussion across the state is going to be exceedingly important. When I first came to the Legislature there was a PTA brochure that I read that I've quoted many times, but it had a phrase in it that elected officials can only do those things that the public are willing to accept and support. And in the final analysis that's always true. Certainly the Legislature and the executive branch can provide leadership and direction, but eventually it requires public acceptance, and that public acceptance is going to be arrived at by a public discussion and a public understanding of the various alternatives. One additional thing I should say, and this is irrelevant in many respects to the introduction of the resolution, but we are all aware there's a variety of other