

if that is done statewide then their workload, by rights, should be reduced and we've created an entity that at some time we may want to say, you know, reduce it somehow in terms of people, or maybe you could eliminate it. I think that Senator Kristensen has got a good point, that we do need the body there to make those decisions and it's very important, in the next few years as we work to get to 100 percent in terms of valuation. So I think it's real important that we consider Senator Vrtiska's amendment, and I'll be supporting it on those basis that I had stated. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Madam President and members of the Legislature, I, too, have a concern about being fiscally responsible, and I'm hearing that from constituents every time I visit with them. So I think that I know that I will be supporting Senator Vrtiska's amendment, but I have a couple questions I'd like to ask Senator Kristensen.

PPRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Sure.

SENATOR STUHR: You know, I keep hearing about adding more, more commissions. And will we be replacing, you know, will this be eliminating any other positions? Or is this just another layer of bureaucracy, so to speak?

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Well, understand where we're headed with these appeals. Right now they have to appeal to the district court and quite frankly most people, that's an impossible task to get to district court. It's going to be cumbersome, it's long. And what we're doing is replacing the district court with a body that does this full-time, is more professional, will give you better values. But we're also making it easier for the average citizen to appeal their property tax values and to achieve some inner county equalization. Now is this just another board to go and oversee and study things? No, I mean this really is replacing the court system. Now they'll have an appeal to the Court of Appeals, but I think you can look to people and say, look, if you want a meaningful appeal of property tax valuations, you go to district court, you're going to wait two to three years, you've got judges that don't want to do that, you get 93 different opinions. Here you've got one