

understand that the heart of the issue is double taxation of certain lands along the Missouri River. These landowners are the ones that have been taxed by Nebraska for years and years and years, I understand in some cases probably up close to 100 years, but have never been taxed by Missouri who are now being threatened by Missouri that they will begin receiving the Missouri tax notices. In fact, I think some of them have already received those.

**SPEAKER WITHTEM:** Time. Senator Vrtiska, you're recognized to speak five minutes on your own time.

**SENATOR VRTISKA:** Okay. These notices are being sent out at the direction of the State of Missouri for both personal and real property. Now I think you have to understand that, that this is now happening and this is where part of the problem is certainly...becomes a real problem to those people who own that land down there. Oddly enough, those who are just beginning to receive notices are landowners on the Nebraska side or the river and no legal justification is being given by Missouri for those notices. In fact, in a recent article from the Saint Joseph News Press, Mr. Gary Cooper, who's a member of the Nebraska... or the Missouri Boundary Commission, acknowledged that Missouri had decided to tax land on the west side of the river to, quote, give Nebraska a good reason to settle. I find that remark and Missouri's attitude to be arrogant and void of any sincerity in reaching agreement at all unless it conforms to exactly what they want. Attorney General Stenberg has recently sent the Attorney General of Missouri a letter requesting their legal justification for the notices, but of course he hasn't received any reply to that letter yet. To this date and throughout this entire process the State of Missouri has not presented any legal information which supports their claim of jurisdiction over the land. In fact, we have attorneys from our district, from my district, who have been in court on issues about some of this land and, in fact, in some cases have won and the land therefore became Nebraska land. The point of it that Senator Wehrbein brought up and I agree with him is that we don't want to go to court. We don't want to spend millions of dollars to determine this if we can settle it in a more amiable way and that's what I hope to do by working with Senator Wehrbein and the... the Government Committee on this issue. Another problem that I have with this legislation is that there has never been a proper survey done along the river for a great deal of time. Our own state surveyor said at the committee hearing on this bill that