

SENATOR CROSBY: Time. Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Before we continue with the next speaker I'd like the Legislature to pay attention to some guests that Senator Bromm has here today. They are under the north balcony, Norman and Lucille Pickhinke of Howells, Nebraska and Lucy Mochnayova of Slovakia. Would you please stand and be recognized and welcomed by the Legislature. Thank you for being with us today. Senator Vrtiska, on your amendment.

SENATOR VRTISKA: I'll pass for now, thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you. Senator Lynch, on the Vrtiska amendment.

SENATOR LYNCH: Madam Chairman and members, I'm going to support the Vrtiska amendment and I don't do it lightly, but on the other hand I don't necessarily like to see us doing something here on the floor that would make it appear that we're really serious about property tax because you all know in your heart this isn't going to mean a thing. I served on a county board that never did spend as much as we were authorized to spend, but I was fortunate to be from a county that had a lot of value increases every year and in fact in some cases we reduced the mill levy. I got elected for darn near 25 years for that. Had nothing to do with it. We had the good fortune of having a county that had a lot of economic development and then of course along came 775 and we didn't have nearly as much so obviously they have a problem now, but we all know that. Lowering the levy limit will mean nothing. It depends upon the area served by whatever jurisdiction is in that area that has very little valuation increase. They have a serious problem. If they're at or close to the limit now, they're going to be hurting. You know when you talk about 1 percent you're not talking about 1 percent, you're talking about 20 percent. If their levy limit is 5 percent and that they're at that levy limit and they have to get back down to 4, you're talking about a 20 percent reduction in spending, not 1. Even dumb plumbers like me can figure that out. So what harm are we really doing? You know a long time ago when we offered all these exemptions back in the middle seventies when all this money started flowing in after we got out of the sales and income tax we gave ourselves exemptions. We never did reimburse to the local jurisdictions that amount of money necessary to make up for what we took away from them in the form of exemptions in those days. I'd like to