

SENATOR WARNER: Madam President, members of the Legislature, I'd rise to support LB 490 as it currently exists, and oppose any further amendments for delay. I look upon this, in part, as has already been indicated by Senator Kristensen, but it's a bit of a transition time between now and the adoption of a CA, of a constitutional amendment, which would give it a more clear direction, but the important thing is if the constitutional amendment doesn't go, then this is still a move in the right direction of putting into place a better system of addressing the equity issue of equalization. Reference has been made to the property tax problem or the issue of what may happen. Certainly, I have heard other committees, just today I think I heard Senator Wesely talk about that they were looking at regional health systems as a way of structuring reducing costs, more cost-effective. If any portion of that cost on any kind of a regional operation is going to depend on property tax, and when we get done, there will be some programs that will be in whole or in part continued to be funded from property tax, but the key to making those work are going to be equalization of values. And I look upon the provisions of 490 of starting to put in some people into the system, and you are not losing elected officials, by the way, because the...at the state level because the Board of Equalization will continue to, until the constitutional amendment is adopted, will continue to have the final say, but this board will have a level of expertise and a level of looking at a statewide issue in more than just on a casual basis limited by numerous other responsibilities. Equity in our property tax system comes slowly. We have been moving well, I think, toward that in the last three, two, three years. I think this is another important step toward quality of equalization and I would hope the body would not return the bill for any amendment, but would continue to let it be enacted, put in place, and I think and to move one more positive step toward equity of property tax equalization, which is always going to be an issue. We are not going to totally eliminate property taxes. There is nothing that is more needed, more in terms of a fair system, than equalized values, and I think this LB 490 will be a major step toward proceeding with what we've started with.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Warner. Senator Bromm.

SENATOR BROMM: Thank you, Madam President. Senator Kristensen, if I could ask you a question or two.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Kristensen.