

subdivisions, but the aim of all of those are merely to assist in identifying budget changes and levy changes to the citizens in that area and, hopefully, to provide clearer understanding. The next goal is one that deals with the concept of levy caps to be put into effect over a period of time. It is not a new concept. Of course, as you all well know, the constitution, for many years, has had a levy limit that applied only to counties, but, historically, the statutes have many, many levy limits for various functions at which local governments cannot exceed those levy limits. Then we have another one which is aimed at restructuring the financing of local services to eliminate, to the greatest extent possible, overlapping jurisdiction and financing using state aid so that clear responsibilities for provision of services are established and financed from a single source. As you know, there are a number of bills introduced, in this area, by and large, it would be for the state to take over the operation and sole funding of some of these activities, as we have done in the past with Medicaid and we have done in part with the courts, as we have done in other areas where the state has assumed the cost of the operation. There are reasons for doing that more than just property tax. In most cases, the principal reason would be to restructure, hopefully to provide more effectively and a better quality of services, or at least more uniform in availability of services around the state. Another goal which relates to the state aid in which a concept of equalization aid would be recognized as a factor that should be used, recognizing the difference in abilities of local governments to finance similar packages of services, that is between various subdivisions, and this can work in a variety of ways, not just...we are used to thinking of that in terms of school aid, but it can be done in a variety of other ways as well. One of the goals, that is number 7, which is a little different, it's a goal that we would not do, and it would not be the goal to pass legislation that would hold every political subdivision harmless for loss of revenue in the event that a variety of levy caps are done. The reason for that, that the first option that is looked at are ways to make, either through cooperative efforts or mergers, consolidation to make costs more...to reduce cost, more cost effective, at least, for the operation of government and then the variety of other things that could be done as well. And then the conclusion of the goal recognizes that you cannot separate the issue of providing adequate public services for citizens and the issue of property tax relief. It recognizes that over a period of time any