

this. We are not talking about simply increasing aid to cities, counties, and schools, and calling it property tax relief. That is the message that is going out through both the World-Herald and the Journal-Star, and maybe some other papers across the state, and if they are paying attention to this debate, I want them to understand that this is not the old approach of just increasing aid and calling it property tax relief. This is a totally different approach that says we need to restructure government, we need to downsize government where we can, and bring together different entities that are now not working together to get them to work together, and where we have duplication end the duplication, and try to see what we can do with the structure of government from the state on down through the counties and to the cities and restructure it so that it is more efficient and more able to provide the services necessary at a lower cost. That is a completely different approach than we have ever had in the past in this sort of comprehensive manner. It is not that any particular proposal had not come forward. We have had bills to restructure the schools in the state. We have had bills that dealt with some health and human service agencies and changes there. We have had other legislation piecemeal come forward from time to time over the years, but here, at this time, in this session this year, we are talking about all of those pieces being laid on the table and the comprehensiveness of it, of trying to bring together the forces that are to bear on lowering property taxes with the need to provide as efficient a level of services delivery as possible have brought together...the stars have aligned, in a sense, to allow us to come forward with something different and comprehensive. And so for all those that are out there that are of the tax shift mentality, that don't like the idea, you are correct because in years past I am not sure that some of those efforts were positive. Some have been. Some have been very successful in reducing property taxes, much more so than anticipated, and so we have to acknowledge that that has been the case. But other efforts, and I recall specifically a bill that Senator Lamb was involved in where we threw a hundred-some million dollars out and ended up actually having property taxes go up significantly as a result of that effort. That sort of tax shift effort to reduce property taxes has not worked, and that has been abandoned, I think, in the proposals before this Legislature. We are now considering a different approach, a fundamental approach, and one that I think is...should be embraced by those who have in the past called for a reduction in