

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Thank you, Madam President. First of all, I would like to make about three points, but first of all, I...about the only thing that I could see that could be an improvement on the resolution, and it might be in there in a manner in which I wasn't able to pick up, pick it up, is that, and the reason why I would be supportive of phasing in the approach, as Senator Beutler is projecting, is because for us to be successful in this endeavor, we are going to have to develop stronger partnerships with the local governments. We are going to have to work with them, we are going to have to work with the school districts, with the cities and the counties and the township boards and the NRDs, as much as possible to broaden the understanding of what we are trying to accomplish here when we talk about restructuring government. I know that there have been a number of attempts over the years to develop partnerships with local governments, but I think this is another chance for us to go after stronger connections between local governments and the State Legislature, so that as we go through these policy changes, we can do it as partners and not as a big brother, big sister imposing new restrictions on little sister and brother. I agree that if all we do, as with like Senator Kristensen, if all we do is indicate that this is a complex issue, we will not have accomplished much. However, I don't think that we can get around the understanding that it is a very complex issue. I am continually amazed when I discuss property taxes with constituents, even with those elected officials, how little of an understanding they have in the overall system. That's what I think another one of the benefits of this discussion is, is to continue to reeducate and reeducate and reeducate people as to how all the pieces fit together in what we call our tax system. In fact, I always...I jest from time to time in that I think we'd get a better understanding and have better government if you had to answer a ten question list when you got your driver's license and had to get seven out of ten questions right on our property tax system before you could get your driver's license, I think we'd have less misunderstanding with this whole issue. And, finally, I would like, if Senator Warner would yield for a question, I have a question, if he's on the floor. Is Senator Warner on the floor? How about the vice chair of the committee? George, maybe you can answer this.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Coordsen.