

at all. So with that, I would simply ask you to vote against the Maurstad amendment. It's premature.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Question.

SPEAKER WITHEM: That's not necessary. There are no further lights on. Senator Maurstad, you're recognized to close.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. President. For those that don't have the report by the Housing Trust Fund Committee, I'd like to cite just a couple of findings that they have in their report. First, one of the things that they indicated was in order to respond to this economic development issue, Nebraskans need a flexible state revenue-based housing program which is responsive to local needs. The second thing I want to bring everybody's attention to is, you know, the government is already involved in trying to provide a mechanism to enable affordable housing to exist in our state. Now the report again cites the Nebraska Department of Revenue estimated that in 1994 the combined foregone state revenue due to the federal home mortgage interest deduction allowance and for allowable deductions due to property taxes on real estate, housing units only, exceeded \$60 million. So it's not like we're not trying to...trying to do something. Senator Landis has a bill going through the Legislature now which would allow the Department of Economic Development to work with NIFA in this area, which they've not been able to do before. The opening...the opening paragraph of the conclusion of the Housing Trust Fund Committee report states at a time when there are serious state budget concerns, several property tax reform initiatives, and decreasing support in social service and health care programs looming at the federal level, it is difficult to think about creating new state resources for new programs. The fact remains that if we take out the wording dealing with dollars being appropriated for the trust fund, of course, an A bill could still be generated to provide the revenue, if the bill is successful, to fund the task force and whatever else might...might remain in the bill. But I think it's very important that if state funds are a necessary component of a bill, which I think the indications are that state funds are a necessary component for this trust fund, I believe that the source of the fund should be identified and those funds should be provided, and that we should not pass a