

only tax in this state, and do you know when we started, do you know what the tax rate was? Two dollars, \$2 a hundred. Things really haven't changed that much. If you look at the proposal that the Revenue Committee put out, we're not that much higher than \$2, if you put all these levy limits together. So what happened? Property taxes were too high. So not all that much later, four or five years later, the state cranked it down to dollar and a half. And then it got bad in 1919, 1920, we finally took the county portion down to 50 cents. Historically, we put everything under that \$2 lid, and then we found ways to get around it. We created cities or gave them some power so they really weren't county functions, so they didn't fit under that lid. We created ESUs, NRDs, hospital districts, we did a variety of those things. These levy limits are going to make tough decisions occur, but they are going to make the tough decisions occur with the people best equipped to make those decisions, and those are our friends and neighbors who sit on the county boards, the school boards and the city councils. You don't want this body telling them specifically what area to cut. You want to give them the ability to make the cut. We could raise every one of these levies up so that we take it to the very top, and, in effect, have a \$2.50, \$2.70. Senator Coordsen is right. It could be a dollar, and we could all walk home and say...

SENATOR WILL: One minute.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: ...we did a great job. You know, we cranked down those levy limits and, practically, you've done nothing. You've created a paper tiger. This isn't about whether those cities aren't doing a good job. That isn't even in question. But put it into perspective, and I am going to...we'll have a lot of time to talk about this, but keep this in mind as you look at Senator Maurstad's amendment. In some of these smaller communities, the purchase of one or two pieces of equipment can greatly change what your levy limit or what your levy is. Equalization, valuation, historically, when the rural interests came in and wanted lower property taxes, we went to 80 percent of valuation, and to look at people in towns, we said, well, we are not going to raise your valuations either. We found things like depreciation factors to keep those valuations down so their property taxes didn't go up. And so those...