

SENATOR ROBINSON: Yeah, thank you very much.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Robinson. Senator Warner?
Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I want to respond a little bit to Senator Maurstad, because he raises some interesting points here that's important to bring up about the philosophy of 1114 and how it fits in with some of these levies and combining them and collapsing them. We need to be very careful about, particularly at the county level, who's going to have control of the property tax system, and it goes back that the county board is really the one who has the major contact with the system because they are the ones who send out the tax statement, they're the ones that hear the protest, they're the ones that do the valuations and, quite frankly, when you come to complain about your property tax people go to their county board and, particularly, they go to it at protest time saying, well, look, my taxes are way too high and my valuation is too high. The county board will patiently look at them and say, yes, but realize that we've got this miscellaneous district, for example, the hospital that can levy 7 cents. The statute says there's nothing I can do about it; I've got to put 7 cents into the tax area. The same thing occurs with the extension service, the ag...fair board system. We've got all these little miscellaneous levies out there that, gee, we'd sure like to have some control over but I don't have any control over them. What we've done with 1114 is have a system where the county board is really going to act as the administrator, if you will, of most of the property tax levies and so, on one hand, if I was a county board member I'd say, hooray, I'm finally going to get some control over this, on the other hand they're going to have to make some very difficult choices because now they can't say, look, I don't have any control over the hospital levy, I have to be responsible for that. And what will occur at these meetings is that the county hospital group, the administrator, the trustees, whoever, are going to come in, all these smaller units, including like townships for example, are all going to come in and the decision making process is going to be centralized to the county board. I think that's probably good policy. That's the reason when Senator Warner was talking about a vote of the area to exceed that many times through 1114 you're going to find we've shifted from shall levy to may levy or we've changed some of those