

of a shame. But Senator Warner is essentially correct that if the majority of this body wants to redefine the way values are determined for classes of property, either ag land or commercial or residential, they can do it. That's provided in the constitution. That is dependent on 25 votes and the Governor's signature. I voted for Senator Schrock's amendment because it symbolically states that we should have a relationship between ag land and other properties, and that that is an attempt to do equity and address the problem that Senator Schellpeper raised in that we have a particular form of wealth, the ownership of real estate, that is carrying too large a burden in the total property tax assessments and payments in the state of Nebraska. And that, of course, is the essential effort that we are making with the tax package. Some of us want to reduce that reliance in the ways that are available to us; efficiencies in government, reduction in some services, if the taxpayers will tolerate those reductions in services, and maybe even some alternate funding sources, although we are not sure what those might be, or what they might amount to, or how they are going to be distributed yet, but we are willing to take a chance on those things, and hope that our communities are able to find the resources to maintain what is essential and required for their survival. You can make an argument that you shouldn't put symbols in the constitution, and, in generally, I would agree with that because people don't necessarily understand that they are symbols, and we shouldn't be in the business of tricking people about what the constitution is or the constitution means. But in this instance, the symbolism, the principles, the effort to find equity within our total property tax burden is important enough for me to support Senator Schrock's amendment. I don't know if there are 25 votes left for Senator Schrock's amendment, but I do hope at least that the debate over the amendment has caused us to have a little deeper understanding of what we are about in the property tax package and what we may expect in the future from our efforts to find an equitable and acceptable way to fund the services that people need and want in the state of Nebraska.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam President, members of the Legislature, I'd like to ask Senator Warner a question.