

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Robinson, to speak to the Beutler amendment to the Warner amendment. Senator Kristensen, to speak to the Beutler amendment.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature. Senator Beutler, I've not seen the amendment, but from your discussion and description of it, I...I don't think I have a problem with doing that. I'm...I think this is one of the pieces that, as we've gone along with this debate, has become not only necessary, but I think actually will set the tone for some things to come in the future which I think are very positive, and they're like this. First of all, this council, if it does meet for the first time, allows the public the opportunity to go to a meeting where there's a possibility of all of the property tax users to meet at once and to explain how their piece fits into the entire puzzle. And it's much easier, quite frankly, if you are interested in what's happening with my property tax, if you can go to this meeting and at least get some flavor for what all the different budgets are, how they fit together. This isn't a matter of where you could be snowed and say, well, we've got to do this, we've got to do that. It's a matter of seeing the entire picture, and that's very good. The other part is that the opportunity for these groups to meet together.. and that's the reason I...your suggestion is fine for me, and I don't know about the other members of the committee, but this is the place where the discussion about consolidation will begin, where they're sitting around, wringing their hands, saying, what are we going to do with these levy limits? The first meeting is going to be fun to be at because they're all going to have the same reaction, what in the world are we going to do? Through that discussion is where people begin to say, well, you know, we've always talked about it, but...or, I've always thought of this, but maybe we could get together and do this. This is the seeds to the beginning of doing these consolidations and efficiencies. Is this going to save \$400 million of property tax? Of course not. But it will give you the opportunity, and so with that I'm going to look at it. Is it a hand-written one, Senator Beutler? And that's fine. I'll find it, but I think that I'll support what you're doing because I think it complements the concept we have out here, and I would hope that these smaller towns and the counties and the schools would see this as a real opportunity to come together. The county clerk is going to have to put some information