

Legislature. I want to go back and review with you why the levy limitations are as they are in the area of municipalities, how we arrived at that, and why that's good public policy, and why some of the items that have been said today are predictable, yet I don't think entirely accurate. First of all, the average statewide levy for municipalities is a little over 41 cents. The Maurstad amendment, what he doesn't put on his sheet here is that there's another nickel included on all these so, in effect, you're taking the cities up to 50, the first class to 55, the second classes and the villages up to 75 cents because there's still that nickel available for the cooperative ventures. But what we did with that statewide average, and there will be those that will argue, well, sales tax has such a huge impact upon that, that in effect if you would take out the levy for, I think, Omaha and Lincoln, you're still going to have a community levy somewhere in the neighborhood of 55 cents. So we're very close to the statewide average, even if you take out the two largest communities to do that. But we decided on a structure, and with so many of the smaller communities...and this isn't primarily a small community versus large community because there are a number of smaller communities who easily fit within these levy limitations as well. The key is that those communities have said to themselves, look, either we have a higher valuation and we have our property up to 100 percent of market value or we just don't spend as much. There's a class of communities out there who have chosen to try to offer more services than, quite frankly, they can afford to do. And what makes these levies, particularly in the smaller communities, not as true, is that one purchase can have a huge impact on what their levy is. And Senator Schellepeper is correct. Some of the budgets are smaller, smaller total dollars. The smaller the total dollar for one purchase, whether it's a pickup or whether it's a mower or whatever it is, a street sweeper, can have a huge impact on the levy amount, but the key is expenditures. What are they spending? And the reason that then we put in LB 1177 was to assist those smaller communities that are having trouble with that. LB 1177 is a mechanism where additional monies can be put in at a later time, once we get some of these efficiencies, once we give the communities a chance to look at themselves and say, what are we going to do? But you can take a community such as a Minden or somebody else who they're going to have to scramble and find some different ways of doing business. They're going to look at LB 1085 and see that now we've given the opportunity to do away with the sheriff's department and just have a city