

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Senator Jones. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Coordsen, members of the Legislature, I'm kind of torn on this one 'cause, on the one hand, I become a little confused about what this whole package is all about, but to the extent that we're trying to develop equal paying and equal distribution of a sacrifice, I think that's what the Revenue Committee has tried very hard to do, why is it that some of the communities who are going to get...who want this property tax relief the most and some of the senators in here who want this property tax relief the most then are coming back to us and saying, but we don't want the levy limits on our people? I mean I think that we have to be consistent about this and if we allow this amendment to go through we are not being consistent, in my opinion at least. With respect to the school districts, for example, there is not one single school district that's been allowed to escape from the levy cap. There's not one single school district that's been promised a penny of replacement revenues for the 20 to 30 percent of property tax reduction that they're going to take. Nothing has been promised to any of them this year. It seems to me that however bad you may think it is for villages and cities of the second class, it's just as bad or worse for schools. At least there's 1177 for the small cities, but there's nothing for the schools. If we're going to do something for the schools then I'm for doing something with the small towns and villages. But if we're going to do nothing for the schools and the theory is everything waits till next year and then we'll decide what the solution is, then I think the small towns ought to wait till next year just like the schools wait till next year if they perceive themselves to have some kind of problem. We all wait or none of us wait, we all being the various types of districts that are put in jeopardy, more or less, by this package. I see no reason to distinguish small towns from schools in how we treat them at this stage. Either we provide some relief for both or for neither. And maybe I'm not looking at that quite right and I'd be interested in Senator Maurstad's response and the response of those who are interested in this particular amendment, but I find it hard to separate in my own thinking why we would treat one type of political subdivision different from another and why, simply because of size or because somebody's hurt worse than another, we're going to make some distinction? If the average levy for cities outside of Lincoln and Omaha is somewhere around 4.5 or 5. and