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young family in Kearney, or the entrepreneur in any of our communities, we must strive to lower their burden. That challenge is not only for the executive and the legislative branches of state government, but the challenge also extends to our local governments which, of course, levy the property tax. The Legislature has made strides in reducing the reliance on property tax to support local government and I stand here today to compliment you on those efforts, a job well-done. Many Nebraskans saw the result of your debate and your hard work in their latest property tax statement, but not every Nebraskan has enjoyed lower property taxes and some would argue we have to continue this effort. All local elected officials must recognize and accept this responsibility to reduce property tax burden. However, I would respectfully suggest that the state's responsibility to assist is not yet complete. There is more that we can do, and later this month I will bring a property tax relief package to the Legislature. I will ask you to debate it, to tear it apart, to put it back together and to hopefully pass it. But for any tax relief, short-term or sustained, to be enacted, the focus returns to government spending and, of course, the size of government. I respectfully ask the members of the Legislature and, in fact, all of state government to join with me in a genuine and sustained effort to control growth in spending. If we will say no to rapid spending, we can say yes to tax relief. This I would suggest should be our goal, our priority and our pledge not only to Nebraskans today but also to our children and grandchildren, for we hold their future in our hands. That future is bright in many, many respects, but it's also tied to our ability to keep our community safe. In my judgment, the highest purpose of government is to provide for the public safety. I firmly believe this and I made public safety a priority during the years of service as mayor of your state capital. Nebraskans must and have a right to feel safe in their homes, trust that their children are safe in their schools, know that law enforcement has the tools to protect our communities. The state side of the commitment in my judgment is twofold. First, we have an obligation to have a statewide law enforcement effort that's adequately funded, manned and equipped in order to carry out their duties and to assist our local communities. And, secondly, and just as importantly, we must ensure swift and sure justice for those individuals who have chosen to violate the laws of our state. Part of the obligation