

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 3, 1999 LB 149

school board tables, and I look at putting together a budget and I look at calendar issues, I absolutely have to wholeheartedly support Senator Bohlke's move to change the dates for certification so that we're basing them on actual figures, not estimates, but real numbers. I absolutely support that. I also look at a very practical perspective on the \$22 million in aid. Yes, it was a mistake. Yes, we are in our first year of not being able to adjust for that by raising property tax levels within most school districts, and so I can support that. But what I do have to stand here and address today is the third bullet on the yellow sheet which she gave us at our places today. I have brought with me the "State of Nebraska '98-99 Biennial Budget", and from this budget I can show you that the state of Nebraska poured \$130 million in additional state aid into property tax relief. This went directly to the schools and it's commendable on your part because you were listening to the people and you were trying to provide property tax relief. When we looked at the budget figures that they came back in Revenue Committee, we saw that nonbond property tax relief that was granted by schools only amounted to \$64 million across the state, so the people did not see that \$130 million in their pocket. They only saw half of it. They got 50 cents on their dollar back. Now that's a concern. It's a very serious concern. And when we look at the third bullet on the yellow sheet and we talk about setting the effort rate at ten cents below the maximum levy that we're allowing them to charge, what we're going to allow school districts to do is actually double-dip. They can charge the property tax payer that \$1.10 and they can go back and they can expect the state to also give them, as if they had only charged them \$1.00. I don't think that that was your intent. I think you really want to see property tax relief and, Senator Bohlke, while my heart is entirely with you, my head can't be, because the figures don't back that we are achieving what this body has been trying to do in providing that full property tax relief. So I am looking at Governor Johanns' plan, I am looking at a different approach to providing that property tax relief, and I think we need to give it a chance. So my heart is with you; my head will not be and neither will be my vote.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator. The Chair recognizes Senator Wickersham.