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LB 149

This body has to decide if we want to support education with sales and income taxes or go back to using more...more property taxes. That's the whole thrust of this amendment. I, personally, like sales and income taxes. It's...LB 149 is a 19 million dollar, I think, property tax reduction, because if you don't do it, you're going to have to raise it. When LB 806 was passed, I didn't support it because I thought it was...I didn't like the formula, but it passed. The formula now, with the additional revenue that we've put in over the last few years, has made it more palatable. It's something that we can live with because we put enough extra revenue in from sales and income tax that property taxes have gone down. Some of my rural schools still I don't think get enough revenue but this body decided that's the route we're going to take so that's where we're...we're going to go. But you need to just stop and think where we're headed. The Kristensen amendment is either an increase in property taxes or school consolidation for my area, one or the other, because they'll have to vote to increase their levy. There is just no way they, because they won't be able to operate if they don't get additional state aid. So that means that they're going to probably consolidate some of my schools out there. In LB 149, everyone of my, I think I have 15 schools in my district, each one gains a little; not a lot, but they all gain some. It doesn't put them back to where they were but they gain some revenue and it helps. It keeps them going. Agriculture, as was mentioned, is having a real tough time in this state. My schools are all in ag...ag communities. Property taxes cannot be raised. People, we can't raise property taxes; no...the people can't pay them. They don't have the revenue to pay state property taxes. The sales and income taxes need to be used to help fund education. We can say, well, we've got to fund higher ed, we've got to fund all these different types of education, and they do, but the 500-plus thousand kids in this state that go to a K-12 or whatever there is, they have to be educated. It's a state law. We have to educate them. Universities, we hopefully can have money for them, and I think we will. We always have had money for the universities, but K-12 is a law that we have to help educate them. Our obsolete property taxes in this state are as high as we can let them go. We need to move to using more sales and income tax like LB 149. The original bill is a good bill, and I think the lowering these...the levy has to happen. We have to