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PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Chair recognizes Senator Jensen, on the Kristensen amendment.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I'm a product of the Great Depression, born in 1934, right in the midst of that. And I hope we never see that again. And through that I saw what my parents went through, and it was very difficult for them, farmers, in trying to adjust and trying to live through those times. And right now the ag economy in Nebraska is depressed, and it's going through some tough times. I think we're fortunate enough that the ag economy is somewhat cyclical. And I hope it's at a downturn, and I hope the upturn is around the corner. But that's something that I can't predict, and I don't know that anybody else out there is doing that also. And we are fortunate here in Nebraska that our economy is diverse enough that the business economy has kind of picked up from where the ag economy is down, or we right now would be in a world of hurt in this state at this time. But the business economy, the banking, the telemarketing, all are doing well, and sales and income tax are up, and they are helping support our state. But we don't know how long that's going to happen too. We have a whole generation of people within our state, within our country who have never seen a downturn. Yes, the stock market rises and falls, but it's been gradually on an uphill course. And we haven't experienced the really tough times. I certainly tell my kids and grandkids that...to be prepared for that. And I hope all of you are also prepared for that. I think that's part of the process. I would certainly agree that this state probably needs to put more dollars, as Senator Raikes has mentioned, into reserve for those times when they come. But I do stand in support of the Kristensen amendment because I think it does allow some flexibility for us, allows, without, I don't think, injuring in any way the schools. I support the schools. I support 149. And I would...I can become a stronger supporter if the Kristensen amendment is part of that. Right now really what Senator Wehrbein said, we really have very little flexibility in that 80 percent, at least 80 percent of our budget is totally fixed, we can't touch it; they're entitlements, they are expenses that need to go on. I don't think we need to have anymore encumbrances on our flexibility that we have. Senator Baker was exactly right, one of the reasons that we have such high property taxes is that our