

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

March 16, 1999 LB 179

it, is also included within the bill, is the...is the increase in valuations which tend to go to...tends to go to lower-income people who have been impacted by valuation increases and have had to pay some portion of their currently due real estate tax on their home because of the increase in the value, although their income would have indicated they would have been eligible for a 100 percent increase. It's my position that if what we're looking at is to expend less money on this particular program then probably the better result might be achieved by looking at a change in the valuation of eligibility while retaining the low-income characteristics that currently exist in the program. It depends on what is it that we want to do with the Homestead Exemption Program. Now, the other...another issue incumbent within this bill is the increase of total valuation of a home that will allow a person to be in or to be out of a program. Now I can visualize a person and their spouse buying a \$500 house in 1933 outside of the city limits of one of our growing areas, and today the half acre that house sits on has a tremendous amount of commercial value, for an example, and yet it still has the 24-foot square what we used to call homesteader cabin that there's so many of in Nebraska and the house might have a valuation of \$40,000 or \$20,000, but the land makes it worth something more than that. And so that's another approach if we're trying to target assistance to help people to stay in their home. I'm not so sure that probably the worst approach we have to achieve the aim of the Homestead Exemption Program might well be increasing the eligibility in money, because there we are increasing...it becomes no longer really a low-income program but more of an entitlement to people who become eligible because of either aging or any of the other...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR COORDSEN: ...qualifying standards. So maybe we ought to break this out after we're through this with a further division, because they are important not only philosophical issues but social standards issues to discuss here on the floor of the Legislature and, to be truthful, as I indicated earlier, they really don't apply to the people in my district because both of the cost of the housing and the general retirement benefits that accrue to the folks that live in the small communities which, for the most part, don't push them out on