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LB 419

they were building sites, as if they were building sites because highest and best use of that, even though that might be part of a pasture where cattle graze or it's used for some other animal production, they still retain some sort of identifier being a former building site. And all the person has to do is have them surveyed out and put them on the market and then they become something that they're not today but they're valued for taxation as something they're not today. Those are only a handful of the interesting twists and turns to me that we ran into in looking at ag land valuations. I know we're all familiar with the problem that elderly, low income and disabled have in the cities with...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR COORDSEN: ...rapidly increasing valuations and how that is creating some significant problems for them. We find in a time when those who are in production agriculture are having significantly reduced resources to pay the taxes that there are new ways, and these are, in fact, new ways being discovered to increase the valuations, perhaps even contrary to the trend of the market prices. So it is something that begs for a major study and that's what I intend to accomplish this summer with the help of knowledgeable people in the field. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Coordsen. Senator Wickersham, on bill 419.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Mr. President, members of the body, Senator Coordsen, through LB 419, is causing us to focus on one aspect of the valuation of agricultural and horticultural land. That has been a subject that I think has perennially been difficult for this Legislature to address. It has certainly been difficult for the local assessors to accomplish in any way that was perceived by the owners of agricultural and horticultural land to be fair. And I think it has been a difficult one for the Property Tax Administrator to give guidance and assistance to the local assessors in attempting to accomplish. I know that there were individuals in Douglas County who were upset this year because TERC ordered an increase in the valuation of homes in that county. You ought to imagine the distress that owners of property felt in Dawes County last year when in one area