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LB 414

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. Senator Redfield, on the advancement of LB 414.

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Senator Cudaback, members of the body. As I'm looking at the committee statement, I'm looking to see who were the proponents of the bill; I'm looking to see who the opponents of the bill were. And I know that we've had some statements made here on the floor that some of the judges are buying in, but the fact is I don't have a single letter from a judge, a single letter from a clerk, a single letter from a county that tell me they want me to support this bill. I see that at the time the bill was heard we did have the District Court Judges Association opposing the bill, that the Douglas County Clerk of the District Court was also opposing the bill, and that the State Supreme Court and the County Court Association were, at best, neutral. Now, as I'm looking at what we should do here and I'm looking at efficiency, I would have to say that there's a great deal of wisdom that has been spoken on the floor. Experience has told us that when the state absorbs the cost of any program we spend more money than they have spent at the local level, and so I think that we would have to recognize the fact that overall to the taxpayers we're probably not looking at tax savings. The taxpayer really doesn't care whether it comes out of the county budget, the state budget, the city budget. They only care that it comes out of their pocket and I don't think that we're going to have a gain for the net taxpayers here. The other thing that I am looking at is the issue of property tax relief. We have a number of proposals here on the floor this year that would provide property tax relief. The Governor has proposed that we fund the community colleges again. We already have an approved tax credit to go onto the statements that all of our taxpayers receive. Those things are already proposed and we know that they're very viable and they give dollar-for-dollar property tax relief. This particular bill could possibly give some property tax relief if, and only if, the county chose to reduce their property tax reliance because of the savings. But, in fact, in the 59 pages of the bill, I don't see anywhere that it's addressed that they have to reduce their budget by that much money; that they would be free, in fact, to spend that money on other things. So I am not convinced that this is something that I'm going to support. I see this as a loss to the taxpayers in consideration or in