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FLOOR DEBATE

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all of you to keep an open mind on this bill as we go forward today and tomorrow and next week. I think we're going to have to look for some options, not only in the big picture of tax policy, but we're also going to have to look seriously at this budget that's going to be coming up next week. I heard some on the radio this morning say that they were dead-set against increasing taxes. We know the gap is \$360 million at this point, and I know that you haven't seen the budget yet, but I would just encourage you to keep your mind open. That's what I'm doing. I'm not necessarily at this point committed to Senator Brashear's bill in any way, shape or form, but I am committed to keeping an open mind. If you think that \$360 million can be cut, and additional to the budget we're doing, I think you ought to seriously consider what kind of damage you're doing to the state of Nebraska and its citizens. And when I talk about the state of Nebraska, I include the citizens in the state of Nebraska. Some might interpret that to say, state of Nebraska, well, we don't care about the state of Nebraska; we care about its citizens. But the citizens make up this great state and we've been here since 1867 as a state, and there's been a lot of sacrifice put in over this century-plus to make Nebraska what it is, and the institutions that go with it. And so when we get into analyzing the budget, which I think the proper time will be next week, I want you to look at it very carefully because our committee did not consider this a game. We considered our budget the best that we think we could do for the state of Nebraska and its citizens at this point, obviously subject to your approval or disapproval. But the point will be there's a line somewhere, and I don't know where that line is, about the revenue that we need to raise versus the cuts that we have made and maybe have to continue. And so I'll...that's enough said on that, I guess. I don't want to say the whole speech at this point, but keep an open mind on whatever proposals are coming here. Tomorrow we'll talk about state aid to schools or when...maybe whenever it comes up, but this is a broadening of the tax base that may well have some merit. And the first three the Revenue Committee has done I think will probably be...there's probably more agreement. The other two areas that Senator Brashear is probably...is going to propose probably will be more controversial. But I think in the back of your mind please understand that \$360 million gap is huge to cut