

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

April 24, 2003 LB 759

Brashear talks about to the state is that, it is a savings to the state. But it increases the local resources available to schools, meaning they have ability to raise more property tax. And let me tell you that they will do that. I find it interesting, as we watch the papers on Wednesdays and Thursdays, I think there was a school district down in Senator Vrtiska's district that did not vote to override the levy lid. Is that...I'm sure that's where it was. It was...I can't think of the name of the town. It was down in his district, though, and it wasn't even close. That's telling me property tax owners, time and again, across the state this spring said, no, we don't want to accept the burden of putting more property tax on our school systems. So I find it interesting. And Senator Beutler, I think, was the first one to speak. And I have to echo his comments that this is a change in policy. We've been working away from this over a period of years not to increase the levy limit. We've been going down. What really bothers me...and Senator Brashear's handout, the last one that I have anyway, despite years of new policies and more state spending, homeowners, and I'm going to insert in there "agricultural property owners," have not obtained property tax relief. We've never addressed the entire formula. We said...I say the formula. I'm meaning valuation times the levy limit, or the levy, equals the tax bill. We've always talked about addressing the levy limit, which we do, \$1.00 now for K-12 education. But we've never addressed the other half of the equation valuation. So while we continue to pump more money into K-12 education, real estate taxes continue to go up. And a fact that has not been brought out by anyone that I've heard or read so far is the potential increase in resources across the state with the increased property valuation. I believe Lancaster County was right at the top. And we're talking a 16 percent, or some such amount of increase in valuation. That goes into their local resources, of course, and will affect the state aid paid to Lancaster County in the end. But we've never addressed that half of the equation. You've got X times Y equals Z. We've always worked on X and left Y alone, being property valuation. So I will not support this proposed amendment, for many of the same reasons, I'm sure, that others...I've been gone. I'm, imagine, repeating a lot of what's been said. But I for one do not think it's wise to turn around, reverse our policy that