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LB 379

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Thank you, Senator Bromm, members. Yes, finally, what I would characterize as a fair approach, a fair tax, to our budget problems. You look at what we have undertaken to balance this budget in the last session and what we've been looking at so far, the special session. You know, we've been pretty hard on the working moms, the working class, the middle class, the Medicaid eligibility for childcare, Medicaid eligibility and the childcare subsidies. You look at the...on the cut side of the ledger, then you look at the revenue enhancement side of the ledger, LB 1085 last year, two-thirds of it I would view as regressive. The sales tax, as by nature, is a regressive tax. The cigarette tax is regressive, although well meaning. Well meaning, I still think it's regressive. So I agree with Senator Hartnett that, to proceed fairly, I think that the income tax has to be raised in all sense of fairness to the working poor, to the middle class. I think quite compelling is this handout Senator Hartnett has given to us, and which characterizes the lowest 20 percent of income, and the fact that they pay...a disproportionate high percentage of their income goes to pay taxes, state and local taxes, including income tax or, excuse me, sales tax increases. So, yes, I support Senator Hartnett's approach. I will vote to advance LB 379. Thank you, Senator Bromm.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Synowiecki. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. President, members of the body, I'm going to support this, at least at this case to get it to the next level and to keep it in the mix. I think it's important. If I had my druthers, I would go this way even to the end, much like Senator Schrock indicated. There is advantages and disadvantages to all taxes and that's one of the issues here. Agriculture, we're place bound. If I...I guess I need to live in Iowa and farm in Nebraska. Not many of us can live away from our farm and be there so you can avoid the income tax, like has been mentioned here that many others do. You don't have that opportunity, so you pay property taxes. You're there. You're place bound. At least everybody pays them regardless of where they live. So I guess that's why we have the mix. But it would