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to the truth about it. Okay? The misconception is this. State aid equals property tax relief. You reduce state aid by \$1 and that's a \$1 property tax increase. That's the misconception and I've heard it said many times on this floor. I've heard it said this year. I heard it said last year when we trimmed the growth of state aid by \$22 million. People got up and said, mark it down, that's a \$22 million property tax hike that we're enacting. It's not true, it's wrong, it's false. Only half the districts that qualified for that exception took it last year, to the tune of about \$14 million, not \$22 million. That's 35 percent or so less than what was predicted...what was guaranteed on this floor and other places. The World-Herald did its annual story in January on property taxes, and the theme of the story is about how property taxes went up again in the previous year. But the property tax administrator noted that property taxes did not go up as much as expected, especially when state aid was trimmed by \$22 million. So the question was asked, why? Why didn't that happen? One of the officials in the Property Tax Division said, well, I can tell you what happened. The local districts sized up the situation and realized, well, now, wait a minute. We're not automatically getting that matching state dollar for any local dollar we spend. This is for the equalized districts that are encouraged to spend more. Any spending growth, we're going to have to pay for it ourselves? Well, then, wait a minute. We're going to have to be more conservative. We're going to have to rein ourselves in. We're going to have to show more fiscal discipline. Bingo. There it is right there, friends. State aid fuels local spending. I'm going to run right in the face of the misconception and tell you that in many cases property taxes are higher because of state aid. Look what happened. We took some away and the districts didn't spend as much because, well, if they're not going to play the matching game for us and match us dollar for dollar, then we don't want to play. If you go out and tell your constituents flat out state aid is property tax relief, you are telling them a falsehood. If you go out and tell your constituents, don't worry about consolidating or at least sharing administration; don't worry about becoming more efficient, just spend more money because the state is going to match it dollar for dollar down the road; I think you're telling them bad public policy, but you're telling them the truth, at