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LB 287, 759

LB 759. Senator Redfield.

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the body, hang on to your seats. It's going to be a bumpy road. We have just spent about a half an hour debating the Stuthman amendment. We spent a great deal of time the other day on LB 287, dealing with the same issue, and I heard over and over from members of the body that it seemed discriminatory, it seemed unfair. If we were going to do some, we should do all. I hear it from businesses year after year, sitting in hearings in the Revenue Committee. They come in and they say, I have a product, it looks like this, my competitor has a product, it looks like this, mine has polymer, his does not, they do the same thing, one is taxed, one is not, I want an exemption. Every year we're asked for more and more exemptions and our base contracts more and more, because the argument is excellent. The function is the same of the product or the service and, yet, the state of Nebraska, in its tax code, discriminates. And I have also heard from businesses as they come in, one after another, this is confusing, this is a nightmare, it costs us a fortune in accountants and lawyers; tax it all or don't tax any of it. Well, I've been listening. I've been listening. Senator Beutler said, so what's your idea for revenue? Senator Wehrbein said, what's your idea for revenue? Well, I probably started asking the question why before I was two, and my parents didn't say, just because. They probably did open the back of the watch and show me what was inside and how it worked. And I have sat in Revenue Committee and I have asked myself, why; what is the rationale for the tax code that currently exists? And a great visionary in our midst came before the committee and proposed to us a whole new avenue of broadening our sales tax base, and it made sense to me because there was a rationale. The rationale was not, I'm going to pick on you because I can, or because you didn't hire a good lobbyist, or because we needed the money and you had just enough. The rationale was that this is good tax policy. I have distributed to you some documents. The Mark Twain Institute, there are some interesting factors on here and it brings us back to the heart of Senator Brashear's argument. We've highlighted it. Good producing industries increased in our gross domestic product, but only by 1.3 percent. The average annual rate of change of private services was