

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

May 21, 2003

LB 283

study and so forth the next year or two...but my view has been, and I think it will continue to be, that we have a tax system that definitely needs to move toward...more towards the sales tax and income tax area. The property tax is high, by any standard. It is higher than most states like us. We are in the upper fourth of states in terms of our property tax levels. We're not there in terms of sales and income tax collected. So I think it's good tax policy to shift towards sales and income tax. And the crisis that we're in has forced us to do that. I hope when things get better that we don't necessarily just peel off the broadened tax base, and we don't just peel off the sales tax and not do something about property tax. If times get better and we have the money, I want to do something about property tax. So for my part, I make no apologies for saying I think this is a better tax policy than the property tax route. I hope that we don't always need to raise this kind of money. But realistically, considering the services that people seem to want, the natural increases in health costs and health insurance and salaries, and the absence of deflation or something, we're going to continue to need revenues. So I'm not going to support the Brown amendment. I certainly understand those that do, and commend Senator Brown for bringing the issue. But I am personally not going to be able to support it, for those reasons. Thank you.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Senator Bourne, you are recognized to speak.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Madam President, members. A couple weeks ago, I had spoken with Senator Brown about this, and at the time, I had agreed with what she was doing. And unfortunately, I've thought about it a lot and I don't agree with it now. I think that when we passed LB 1085 a year ago, that was the absolute biggest mistake that we made, was making it temporary. And I was very, very supportive of doing that, encouraged whoever it was that made the policy, or put the package together. I said, we absolutely have to have this as temporary. And I can tell you that if it had not been temporary, we wouldn't have gone through what I feel...all this pain that we have gone through this session. I don't support Senator Brown's amendment. I think that it's a bad policy. And