

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

March 22, 2004 LB 1093

biggest thing on your property tax, but there are other things on your property tax statement also, and you have seen those accordingly raise. And prior to...prior to LB 1059, in the early nineties, there were no levy limits on schools, to my knowledge. And schools, along with cities and counties, still held the line on their spending, as close as they could. But then you had the not only federal government but the state government also came along and said, you're going to have to add this, you're going to have to do this, and they were all very, very good programs. Can't think of any right off the top of my head, but we also...at that time we told the schools, not only schools but other governmental entities, cities, counties, so on, you're going to have to do this; you're going to have to take this over; you're going to have to make sure that your county roads are well graveled, in some cases paved or blacktopped. That all costs dollars. We wanted to keep pushing that off on your property taxes, but your property has increased in value. Farmland probably is the biggest thing that has raised in value, and that comes from the limited amount of...there's only so much land, there's only so much land in any state, and the demand for that apparently has gotten to the point where there's not going to be any more. So if you want a piece of the pie, you'd better...you'd better take that or you're not going to get it. And we have seen neighbors outbidding neighbors, especially in the ag community, for property--oh, that quarter will fit in real good with my land; I'll be able to pay a little bit more for that. And you've increased that. There are other factors also. Out in Senator Jones' district, there are out-of-state people, you know, and we thought that we had that under control, but there's always a way to get around that and to pay excessive amounts for land in this state that raises the value of your land. We go by recent sales. That's the way the value is determined. So it's a vicious circle, folks. And we've allowed...we've allowed the sales tax to raise in this state since the early nineties or mid-nineties, late nineties, when we cut back. I remember very well sitting here and saying, you know, we've got too much money in our Treasury; we're just going to spend it. And there were bills introduced to cut the sales tax, to cut the income tax rate. The following year I was getting over some surgery and Senator Chambers called me. He said, Ray, you remember the