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FLOOR DEBATE

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back on property tax, especially when our valuation growth. And that's the point I wanted to make. We converted a lot of irrigated land in Hitchcock County back to dryland last year. I don't know how many acres or dollars worth, but I know that our valuation remained flat in Hitchcock County. That was one of the reasons. There were some other reasons involved in our flat valuation numbers. But overall I go back to the handout that Senator Raikes gave us and we've got...and I'm talking about overall state increased \$6.1 billion of valuation, \$61 million worth of potential resources to use there for school financing, \$61 million of new revenue on the local level if they just assess the valuation...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time.

SENATOR BAKER: ...growth at \$1 a hundred. Thank you, Senator Cudaback.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Baker. Senator Raikes, on the Wehrbein amendment.

SENATOR RAIKES: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I'll follow up with what Senator Baker just mentioned about the \$6 billion increase in valuation multiplied by \$1 to get \$61 million. Keep in mind now we've already made the point that that's not evenly distributed around the state. There are districts that go up and others that don't go up nearly as much. But also subtract from the \$61 million the \$22 million cut in state aid. So, yes, we had more valuation, but we dropped state aid. Keep in mind also that we have a total budget for schools of about \$2 billion. That's the all sources go to fund. If you take a 2 percent increase in that, that amounts to about \$40 million. So there is, at least on a broad average for the state, there is some increase in school spending that's being allowed. But keep in mind now, too, that there are continually more requirements placed on schools and probably rightly so, we have with the No Child Left Behind Act and generally speaking accountability assessment and so on. There is a great concern with educating the students in the state in such a manner that they can compete. And certainly to tighten down on school budgets as we've already done, but to tighten down any more has