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Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Brashear. Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I'd like to continue my remarks. Last fall Senator Landis pointed out at the retreat that Nebraska has one of the most progressive income taxes of any state with an income tax. So already we are rather discouraging of those of wealth to locate in Nebraska, especially given the other options even among our surrounding states, being South Dakota and Wyoming with a more optimal tax structure. In the mid-nineties this body felt threatened to do something about property taxes because of some ridiculous petitions that were going around or some would call them ridiculous. So the body took some action and told the voters that we want to do something about property tax. And it's my sense that AM3027 absolutely undoes what the Legislature felt threatened to do in the mid-nineties. And so I guess I'd point to the fact that I don't think the Legislature at various times should feel threatened by petition measures. But when we look at the cause and effect of taxes, as I stated earlier, the body basically agreed a couple of years ago that taxing tobacco at a higher rate would ultimately affect behavior/consumption. But some of that behavior, yes, it was affected because I believe tobacco sales in Council Bluffs, Iowa, has increased about 20 percent. So it did affect the behavior, didn't affect the ultimate underlying issue as much as I believe was stated. But we look at the cause and effect of expenses and the outcomes, I think we can all agree that the more tuition goes up at campuses across Nebraska, the fewer students can afford it or at least would need to shift their payment strategy, whether it's debt or what have you. But there is a cause and effect, and I think we need to be sensitive to that. And I know we need money for education. But it would be nice to keep kids in the schools needing the education because they're the ones who are going to move our economy forward. But if we chase them out in the beginning, where are we? What have we gained? And we see this time and time again. I'm in the real estate business, and I constantly hear people carping about property taxes. I can't disagree with them. It's unfortunate that we have ourself in this situation. Our state aid formula I would say is quite