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FLOOR DEBATE

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but I think this at least is a start to address some of the problems that have been raised, without depriving the counties of their opportunity to pay for the district court clerk. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Thank you, Senator Flood. Senator Stuhr, followed by Senator Wehrbein, Senator Baker, Senator Don Pederson. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Yes. Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. First of all, I do want to thank Senator Beutler for his work on this issue, because I know he has spent a great deal of time. Also, there's been a great deal of discussion about the takeover of the state in regards to the county assessors. And I think we all know that, the way that bill was written and executed, it did not work well, and we came back in a couple years and in fact changed that. I do believe the bill that we have before us that Senator Beutler is proposing is certainly structured in a better way. It prevents that patchwork that took place under the takeover of the county assessors. I think there are several concerns, at least that I have, and that they have been expressed this morning, a problem of what will the counties do to obtain some of the lost revenue if their offices are taken over. That is a concern, I know, by the counties. I think there's also a concern of some of the employees being county employees and then also the state employee. It's my understanding, even when this took place in the assessors, that all of a sudden they have new computers, they have new office equipment, they have a higher salary, and these are all things that do play a part. I do...am opposed to the increase in fees. It was only three years ago that we raised court fees from \$1 to \$5. Last year, we made some additional increases in court fees to help cover the judges' retirement. And I just have a real problem of looking in this area for increased fees. I am interested in the amendment that Senator Flood is bringing. I personally wonder how much of a management problem there is, if that is really what we're trying to get at is this management process. It seems to me that if all of the district clerks were to obtain and meet certain standards, that the Supreme Court certainly would be involved in that process and we would have a great deal of uniformity. I don't see Senator Beutler. I was