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FLOOR DEBATE

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going to give him the remaining of my time if he would like it.
Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: (Microphone malfunction)...Flood? Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: (Microphone malfunction)...President, members, I'm going to be brief, because there has been a lot of comments. But my concern...I've been supportive of this in the past, but I understand some of the concerns that some of the clerk of the district courts are having now. And I intend to spend some time over the weekend talking to...about some of their concerns. I really wanted to say, I'm most of all concerned about the responsibility that the Supreme Court has, without the authority to do anything about it. That is my concern primarily, and one of the reasons I was enthused about this. I think the money and the financial part of it is a consideration. It should be received as property tax relief by the counties, but apparently it isn't. One of the things that I'm cautious here...and I applaud Senator Beutler's putting the phase-in plan, because that's one of the mistakes, in my mind, that we made when we took over the...when we started taking over assessor functions. There was no plan in place. I really believe, in spite of the fact that there's been some disgust, if you will, with the assessor program, that could have worked better if we would have had a plan, had a phase-in, and allowed for, I call it clusters, for lack of a better term, where counties could have had, in an area or a region, it would have been more efficient for one person to do that. We're at the place now that some counties could come on without any additional cost at all. But we have no plan in place that that can be accomplished. And so I think it's not quite correct to call the assessor thing a fiasco, as some of my mail indicates. But we did have a problem there with statewide assessments, and to some degree, there's still some occasional problems. And that's one of the reasons that we looked at that, in addition to the cost to some of the counties, it was an undue burden to keep those evaluations up to date. I don't want to make that mistake here, and so I do think that we need to have the phase-in plan. And I believe, as near as I can tell, Senator Beutler's plan is pretty good. I'm...I guess the way I understand it...and I