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FLOOR DEBATE

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priorities. That's all that I had, Mr. President. Thank you.  
(Legislative Journal pages 474-477.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Back to discussion of the Beutler amendment to the committee amendments to LB 529. Senator Baker, followed by Senator Don Pederson.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I want to continue the discussion here. I don't want to tie this bill to the county assessor situation. I do have a bill introduced concerning the county assessors, and to tie this to what we've done with the assessors, the state takeover of counties for assessing duties, is not fair to Senator Beutler's bill. And I want to clarify a few things. I have a county in my district, in fact, where I live is a state-assessed county, and it's worked very well. The problem we ran into with that is, we had a budget crunch and we had various counties applying to be taken over by the State Assessor's Office, and we had no money. And I think at one time, maybe it was Senator Wehrbein, I think, had a bill carried for the Governor to give those back because of the budget crunch. The error we made there was that we didn't do it uniformly and have the process down well. As Senator Wehrbein said, we had a county here, a county there. And I think there's nine counties, I believe it is--I'll probably get an e-mail saying I'm wrong--but I believe it was nine counties, and they're scattered all over the place. And to create an efficient network, we needed to congregate or cluster these. As Senator Wehrbein said, we did not. The bill that I do have allows the county...or, the state Property Assessment Taxation to take over adjoining counties if they can do it at no additional cost to what is now being...costing the counties. So we want to try and rectify that yet this session somehow also. Some of the concerns that have been raised out in the rural areas is the timeliness of filing restraining orders and so on like that. Where the county clerk is there five days a week and basically eight hours a day, how is that going to be handled? Well, I've learned a great deal just this morning, and I have studied this bill quite a bit. But one of the reasons we need to go ahead and do this is so that we can provide some uniformity. And I was told by the court administrator they're going to have a couple counties up within the next six months