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saying and certainly what other candidates are saying about tax breaks, I said that my first belief is that we need to make certain that we can pay our bills, and if we've done that then we can start talking about a tax reduction.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: And I think that we have established that we are in a position now, from what we've done on the Appropriations Committee, to pay our bills. We've paid what's reasonably needed for our state. But I think we have to have a discussion about the response that we have to people's concerns about the tax brackets. I think we have certainly somewhat of a public relations concern, because I think people are expecting us to look at the tax situation in Nebraska and be responsive to their concerns. And for those reasons, I think that it's premature to be bracketing this bill. I think we should hear what it does, why it does it, and what opportunities we have to be responsive to the needs of the public. So, as I said earlier, it's pretty obvious this is not an orchestrated thing on the part of the Appropriations Committee, because I'm expressing my own personal opinion, as the others have, I'm sure. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Don Pederson. Senator Howard.

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the body. I rise in support of the home repair sales tax issue. This was a tax that was put on the backs of homeowners in 2003-2004. This tax not only is confusing and unfair, this tax promotes values and ideals that are not those of Nebraska. We have the responsibility to encourage people to keep up their homes. My office has been given over 8,000 signatures of constituents who are in support of taking off the home repair sales tax. It's important to the homeowner to be able to make needed repairs. Who of you lives in a home, you have to face the issue of plumbing repairs, electrical repairs, you're sitting in your dining room and the roof starts to leak, repairs that you are faced with, you can't put off? I've received many phone calls, many e-mails, many letters and have been stopped