

April 17, 1975

least from these sources of wealth we should have an equitable contribution from all people. So we feel that these mill levies that we have placed here for the various class of schools, again, reflect what we think are the more reasonable qualifying levies. We also define in section 5 those operation expenditures that would be excluded in computing the schools budget for the purpose of receiving aid. Then, of course, we go into section 7. We're talking there about the annual increases in restrictions. Those of us who are in education, I'm proud to say that I have been in it and will hopefully always remain there, know that to operate under restrictions is always an unpleasant facet . . . fact of life. We realize that in this day and age it seems as though legislators and others think that this subdivision of government with the greatest responsibility of any subdivision of government in the state should operate with certain restriction. I guess what we did, as Senator Lewis eluded to this morning, was we merely took the limitation bill a couple years ago and placed it into this aid bill. It's explicitly laid out and understood. This is LB 368. Getting to Senator Keyes' remarks about the 40 percent. If we were to fund the schools today at 40 percent of the cost the amount would be somewhere around \$136 million. We presently are giving to schools \$55 million. This has been given to them over a period of several years. If you don't believe it has brought about some rather dras . . . or I think dramatic changes in terms of property tax burden, all you have to do is look at the figures, which I handed out to you yesterday. It shows that across the state, if you apply aid to the schools this amounts to about 9 to 10 mills of property tax relief, what we presently get under \$55 million. Now that is really from property. I don't think anybody can argue against that. We also know from a survey that we took in the 60 largest schools in the State of Nebraska. These are verified. You'll see some of the information I received, that sheet that I gave you. It shows the verification by legislative staff. If you look at what it's going to cost us across the board and project the budgets for this year, we're looking at a possible 6 mill increase across the state to meet next years fiscal budgets for this operation of the school os the State of Nebraska. Now if you go one step further, you look on the board and you see a bill that's called LB 344. At least as I read the pulse of this body it appears that we want to keep the community college at the concept of the local type of endeavor, with the ability to levy up to 2 1/2 mills on property tax for their operation. All I'm saying to you, gentlemen and Senator Marsh, is that if this happens you can expect the property tax in the State of Nebraska across the state to increase a minimum of about 8 mills. This is across the state I remind you. In some school districts that are poor in terms of valuation, the property tax increase will be more dramatic. Unless those school boards were to cut programs . . . when they start cutting programs then the only people who really suffer are the boys and girls in the State of Nebraska. I'm here today very sincerely asking you to search your conscience to realize that the decent thing we can do is to give to the schools of the