

March 13, 1984

LB 809

reduction and tell them it is property tax relief, we are going to look like damn fools. Those folks are going to say, you know, that is not very much in property tax relief and I agree with them. It is like a slap in the face. If we are going to give them any property tax relief, it has got to be enough to be noticeable, at least. It can't be such a small amount that they can't even tell it in their total. Now the reason I am not the greatest fan of LB 809 is because LB 809 or any mechanism using homestead exemption as a flat rate to everybody doesn't recognize that there are differences in property tax burdens, doesn't recognize that some people pay a lot more property taxes than others. It gives to the homeowner the same amount whether they have a home with an acre or whether they have a home with 5000 acres. And for us to tell them that we are going to give this one amount and that is going to be property tax relief, I think is ridiculous. But to lower that sum is even more ridiculous. My contention has been all along and I think it is a good one, I think this body accepted that a few days ago, is that we should look at where the problem is. The problem is in the funding of our public schools. We should look at that problem and then say, okay, we are going to set up a mechanism to provide parts of those funds from the sales and income tax in an effort to lower the levy on property taxes. If you lower that levy considerably or you hold the levy down from going up anymore, that is going to be property tax relief to the degree that it is equitable in comparison to the amount of property that a person is paying taxes on. So I am opposed to the Beutler amendment even though I am not very favorable to the bill itself. If we are going to give them anything, let's...for goodness sakes, let's not give them just a very small amount and try to convince the folks out there that this is property tax relief because it is really not going to be.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I am opposed to the Beutler amendment. And I guess this issue is one that makes me a legislative veteran. I have been here less than a year but some of the folks that have been around awhile say, if you have been around a while, these issues