

about. What this is, is a process. And as legislators we're really in a unique position today because as we sit here as 49 people we have the opportunity to see the whole state. We have the opportunity to see people with their own views of what's good for them. And those views get brought here in the form of amendments, and that's not bad at all. In fact, that's what's healthy about it and that's what makes the compromise or that's what folds and makes the state policy. But the next two bills that we're going to vote on really have pitted local interest, long held interest, against each other, against the state. And that doesn't mean those local schools and cities are wrong in their views, it means that they're very, very correct. They've stood up for what they believe and how it affects them and that's their job is, how does it affect them? Their job is to take care of their school and their city. And for that I think we respect them. And this is not a beginning of a war against the state and the cities and the schools, not at all. And it's easy for us to sit back and do nothing because it's difficult to do. It's difficult to look at our friends in the cities and the schools, counties, and say, I'm sorry, we want to put levy limits or spending limitations. But it's much easier to do nothing and just let the problem fester, and we all know that cannot occur. And it's been a very difficult process. The real change is going to come from those local officials. And that's the only reason that I have some trust to do that is because those local officials are very innovative, good, sincere, and decent people. And I think that we have the ability to pass these types of bills that'll force them in a structured way and in a safe way to begin to reexamine how they deliver services, how this state's structured. And if we're going to make some meaningful changes, it can't be done in a crisis mode, it can't be done immediately. We didn't get to this problem in a few short years and we're not going to address the property tax problem without taking some years to do so. And that's where this package of bills have really done that. There's two choices here. You could either view this as a storm that all you've got to do is survive and weather it, and hopefully we can change and adjust the levies, and we can adjust the spending limitations. Or they can see this as a real opportunity to make meaningful change in the state. And the test can't occur without us passing these bills to begin with. For some of us it's very, very difficult. For some of us this package is not near enough; for some of the rest of us it's way too much. And maybe at the end that's what it's all about, is that it's