

bill?

SENATOR KEYES: Yes, just to say a very few things. I never have believed in all the time that I have been here that we should tax food, tax food to run state government nor should we tax food to run the City of Omaha, Bellevue, Lincoln, and the other cities that have a sales tax on food. We have overcollected this year. I just got the report. We have \$115,500,000 in the general fund and all bills were paid up due last night, all bills were paid due. That is the most I believe that we have had in the treasury any time in the last year. So we are gaining money and we are paying our bills. The thing I want to talk to you about is that there is no way that you can say that seven percent is the legitimate amount to increase the food tax credit. That is what the Governor will support. The President of the United States says that the cost of living and the wages may be settled anywhere between eight and ten percent this year. The \$8 that we put on the food tax credit was a forty percent increase. If we are going to hold it to seven percent, then we certainly can't give a forty percent increase and say we are living within the seven percent increase in the budget. I don't know how much \$12 is but it will be well over fifty percent, probably about fifty-five percent. The thing of it is, friends, let's take the tax off of food and forget about it, and forget about how much we send back, but if you don't want to do that, then let's come through and say we are going to leave the credit at \$20 and we are going to return out of the money that we have collected this year that is far, far more than we need to run state government, let's return some of it to the people. I offered you that amendment. You turned it down. I hate to go to this amendment but I am going to vote for it that brings it up to \$32. I am going to support it, not that I believe that we should obligate this state next year to a \$32 food tax credit when maybe we won't have that much. Maybe the prices will tumble and we will be in a recession and we won't generate enough money and then we will have to increase taxes to do so, and when we increase taxes, we will have to increase them on food. Friends, please consider one time and one time only that the food tax credit ought to be removed. If you can't do that, then send them back \$20 in money that has been collected this year that we don't have any use for unless somebody out here dreams up a use. The best use you can do is give it back to the people. I am going to support Senator Chambers on his \$32.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Fowler.