

March 27, 1980

LB 647

questions. Among those were a couple of questions that bear on the questions that Senator Fowler just asked concerning the question of the \$25,000 limit and the impact that reevaluation had on property tax relief for the elderly. I want to give you the response to that question. Thirty-seven of the eighty counties that responded to my survey said that they believe that people with homestead exemptions would have a problem because of the reevaluation in their county and the \$25,000 actual value limit. Thirty-seven out of eighty. So that meant that eighteen counties said that the effect would be minor and that the extra tax could be afforded by their older citizens, and twenty-three counties said there wasn't going to be any effect, which essentially says about...oh, roughly a half of the counties in this state felt that \$25,000 limit was inadequate. That is not to say that all counties across the state felt the \$25,000 as it stands now would not be adequate and so that is an important point. Now the next question concerns the actual value of homes owned by people over 65 in their county. I asked them what would be the actual value pretty much for those homes. The response was that 15 counties felt that the actual value would be over \$25,000 for older citizens and 51 counties responded that they felt that the actual value on the average would be under \$25,000. I guess from these figures the basic point to be drawn is that if you contacted the county assessors across this state and talked a bit about what the problem was with the actual value limit, you would find that in limited areas of the state \$25,000 was wholly inadequate and that you would have to raise it to \$40,000 as Senator Labeledz is proposing. I would particularly point out that Lincoln and Omaha have got a situation where that would be very much, in fact, an important point. But generally speaking across the state you are not going to have the sort of problem that we do have in the larger areas, the populated areas, and so perhaps the \$32,000 that Senator Newell is offering as an amendment would be appropriate by and large for the average home in the State of Nebraska. So I guess the question that is before us whether we want to...there is no one standard figure that is going to apply across the board fairly to everybody in this state. That is the problem we have got in this state because there is such a variety in actual values and assessments in the State of Nebraska. So the question you have to ask yourself is whether you want the actual average or whether you want to have a figure that across the board would pretty much cover most older citizens in this state and that is what \$40,000 limit would provide. Now keep in mind one other aspect of this, and that is that last year approximately \$31,000,000 was allocated to the homestead exemption program to help older citizens, and out

9221