

has utilized this authority. The rule relating to LB 116 would provide that the citizens of Lincoln, Nebraska will have a voice. That is as it should be. It may not be easy to sell but I believe they ought to have that option and we need your help in order to even make that option available. Please help advance LB 116. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Senator Higgins, do you wish to speak on the bill?

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. Omaha does have a city sales tax and I am told the people of Lincoln voted mostly against it. I think it is time that we realize the whole State of Nebraska is in dire straits, agriculture, banking. Cities are losing their funding from the federal government. We talk about broadening or worrying about the broadening of the state's tax base. I know that we have introduced legislation to take away the exemption that business has on the utilities sales tax which would generate a lot of money for the state but we have never done that. We continue to exempt businesses from the sales tax on utilities and I am sure that would raise, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars, maybe millions. We have introduced other bills that would have generated more money for the state. I recall when I went before the Revenue Committee and asked to increase only one half of one percent the premium tax that insurance companies pay on policies, and I only asked for it on the liability portion of an automobile policy, not the whole policy. I didn't ask for it on health, life, accident, any other form of insurance. If we had done that, increased the insurance companies premium sales tax, it would have generated about a million dollars, just a half a percent of one portion of one type of policy, but we didn't do that. There are a multiplicity of ways that we can get more money for the state. One of them would be to look at the industries that we have been taxing year after year after year and then go back and look at those industries, such as the insurance companies, who have not had a rate increase in their taxes since 1945, that is 40 years ago. I am not so worried about the City of Lincoln sales tax taking away the state's tax base. I think it is time that we all realize if Lincoln has a problem, why isn't Lincoln's agriculture's problem. Agriculture keeps telling us their problems are the cities problems. I am going to vote for this bill because I think it is time we come