

bill of the Class I system of reorganization, it is not a realistic fear from the standpoint of its constitutionality in the way it is in the bill, from the standpoint of our opportunity to change it. What is available to us now is that refinancing. I urge you, I beg you not to accept the amendment. The amendment will get you 662 passed and signed into law. This may or may not be signed into law if you pass it this way but this is the courageous route.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Vard Johnson and then Senator Beutler.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I, too, rise in opposition to Senator Wesely's amendment to strike from LB 662 the language regarding the financing of education from 1987 forward. A month ago I used an image of you and I collectively painting a picture. We are painting a picture of our system of taxation in our state. LB 662 represents a portion of the canvas and that first portion that is being painted I think relatively clear with the lines distinct, with the images clear, is that portion dealing with school organization, and as you and I have talked over the last month on this question, school organization has never been a quality of education issue, it has always been a tax equity, tax base, tax finance issue. I believe at this juncture that 662 shows that image well as to how school organization will ultimately shape up in 1989. Now the second part of the picture, which is an integral part, not separable from, but a totally integrated part with, blended together with the tax equity issue is the school finance question and here the images are still dark. In the words of St. Paul, we are still looking through the glass darkly at exactly how that is going to shape out, but what we do know is that at this juncture we are making a collective commitment to increase the sales tax in 1987 and use the monies generated therefrom to finance education, and in addition, we know that we are saying that the Legislature shall strive conscientiously and hard to appropriate enough dollars to make certain over time that no more than 45 percent of the average budgets throughout our state are consumed by property taxes. That is a commitment that we are making. It is a commitment of state aid that we are making. It is a commitment in finance that we are making. And in my opinion, it is a commitment that is long overdue. Nebraska remains one of those few states that requires local school after local school to rely so extensively on the