

other important areas this session. In the instance of the City of Omaha, for instance, it will no doubt be a net gain, and so for that as well as all the other reasons stated, I would certainly urge that we support this very important element of the package that is designed to prevent an increase in the sales tax or income tax rate.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Thank you, Senator Hoagland. We are not very disciplined this afternoon. We are kind of milling around. That is bad form. Senator Vickers is up to give an important presentation. Senator Vickers.

SENATOR VICKERS: Thank you, Mr. President. I don't know how important it is but I would like to make a few comments regarding this particular amendment. As one of the individuals that has worked very hard and very diligent over the past number of years for increases to state aid to education, I have to stand to support the Appropriations Committee with this amendment. Now I would remind not only this body but the schools across this state that it does not necessarily have to happen the way Senator DeCamp and the way Senator Sieck pointed it out. This body yesterday, today, and it looks like probably tomorrow, and maybe the next day are going to be involved in making some very tough difficult decisions. It is not easy to say you don't have the funds to do the various things that many of us would like to do, that many of us recognize perhaps need to be done, but we simply can't do it because we don't have the funds to do it. I think once we have made that decision in this body, once we have addressed those tough issues, it is appropriate that the school districts of this state do the same thing. There are ways they can operate more efficiently. Don't let anybody kid you that they are totally efficient out there. They are not. There are ways that they can cut their own budgets to some degree. I don't think it hurts us to send this message to them that, look, folks, we are tightening our belt a notch or two, and I can assure you I wouldn't be supporting this if we weren't tightening our belt because I don't think that would be fair at all. But if we are tightening our belt a notch or two, I don't think it is going to hurt anything to ask the school districts of this state to tighten their belt a notch or two either along with the counties and the cities. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Senator Lynch.