

June 5, 1985

body in showing that it can make the tough decisions that are required when you assemble that kind of budget. You similarly faced the same kind of decision when you took on the Rotunda full of interest groups who were saying let's not expand our sales tax base, let's not expand our income tax, let's keep it exactly the way it is. But on behalf of all the citizens, in an effort to be fair, in an effort to be equitable, in an effort to say we are going to try to expand it as much as possible so that all of us pay our fair share so as to keep the overall rate down, both that action and the action on the budget have enabled us to adjourn here today saying to Nebraskans that we've kept your tax rates the same as they were last year. Even LB 662, in my opinion, continues our progress towards educational reform and educational excellence. It gives us the chance, at least, to improve the quality of education in our state. It doesn't necessarily mean it will happen. We have many hurdles to jump between now and the time that it is fully implemented. But it can provide us with superior education and better education, we don't need to divide over it. We will, between now and the special session in August, have much opportunity to begin the affiliation and merger process. I expect to be able to present to you such opportunities as I can in August when we reconvene for a special session on education. Believe that 662, in the end, will improve our education for all of our people in Nebraska; that it is going to provide us the basis for greater excellence. We took significant action in LB 271, carrying on the constitutional amendment, last November, that gave us the basis to evaluate and value ag land separately, in a different manner than commercial and industrial property. And even though it's been predicted that that perhaps is going to come back to haunt us, I don't believe that it will. I believe that it is going to go down as a landmark piece of legislation, and it is going to be a model for other states who are similarly faced with the task of trying to value ag land differently than other commercial and industrial property. You have, in my opinion, accomplished much in this session, not just in the 90 days that you met, but in providing the basis for action in the interim, the basis for action in the next session to continue our quest to improve education, to continue our quest to provide new jobs for Nebraskans, to continue our quest to protect and preserve and use our natural resources wisely, to continue our quest to provide services for Nebraskans so as to give them some hope that they will have