

going to do, the Revenue Committee, is study this issue because we feel that many of those individuals who are taking advantage of the homestead exemption really are not entitled to it, if you really look at their total situation. So we have to take a hard look at it and see whether we're not abusing the homestead exemption as individuals, not as counties, but as individuals. And this is something that the Revenue Committee is going to do this year, is study this issue and see whether we can come up with a new solution to the homestead exemption and see whether we can't weed out those individuals who are taking advantage of it. I could look at my own and I think there is many other property tax owners who own their own homes out on the land, could be taking advantage of this, but we haven't, but there are some that are and I'm curious whether they really should have it. With this I'll close, but we do want to include this at the present time.

PRESIDENT: Senator Lynch.

SENATOR LYNCH: Mr. President and members, it's already been exercised I know enough. I'd like to comment just quickly though that this is not the way to go about this kind of a problem. It's not the back door, but in a sense it is. Some people don't really maybe understand what is really happening here. I think that all the previous speakers addressed the issue very well. The way this works simply is somebody comes into the courthouse. They testify to the fact that they are eligible because of age or disability and if they are disabled they have to have a letter from the doctor. All of that information is certified to make sure that they are, in fact, eligible. The Legislature created the circumstance, not the counties, not the cities or not the schools and right now in the middle of their budget year is not the time to cause them the kind of serious budget problems. In addition, we should first answer the philosophical questions raised by Senator Hannibal about how we expect to go about resolving our budget problems at the...by transferring those responsibilities back to local local property taxpayers, by not funding this exemption, but the way to go about it would be to do away with the exemption. The honorable way would really be to, if you don't want to use this sort of funds, if you want to transfer this kind of money and reserve it for the state General Fund, the way to do it would be to first of all do away with the homestead exemption which is another issue,