

from the state. Somehow in the state aid programs that we have had the last few years since I have been in the body and prior to it, the money seems to be lost. The people are not getting property tax relief. For example, we are giving over 10 percent of our budget to state aid to education and yet it doesn't seem to have made a dent in property tax relief in the state. I don't feel that this is the proper approach. I think we should fund the homestead exemption. In fact, I think we ought to possibly reevaluate the entire program of property tax relief because it isn't working right now. And to do away with the homestead exemption at this particular time would be a slap in the face to all the promises that we have given to the people the last few years of giving property tax relief. So I will not support LB 6E.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DECAMP: Mr. President, once a year, whether I need it or not, I try to make a trip around the world, always try to find somebody to pay for it, and I do that because I think one of the best things you can do to get a real perspective on what is really happening in the world is to immerse yourself in other parts of it. And I wonder if maybe it isn't time for the whole Legislature to take a trip around the world with respect to the whole picture of taxes and government spending and I think you will learn that we are focusing a lot on the wrong things, be they the homestead exemption or most of the things here. Let me try to explain that a little more clearly. We are going to be obsessed this session with approximately an \$850 million state budget. When you pick up the front page of any of the newspapers you are going to read about the Legislature and an \$850 million state budget. That is what the focus of the public, that is what the focus of the legislators, that is what the focus of everybody is. But the real focus, I think, and I think it is time we start shifting it there, the real focus should be the whole picture of government spending in Nebraska. There is an \$850 million budget here where all the attention is. There is more than a \$3 billion budget of government spending in this state. Almost all of it or the vast portion of that 3 billion plus is local government over which we apparently have no control. In fact, of the \$850 million, what, better than half is going to local government to feed that other portion. Now at some point we have to get a fix on where we are. We have to back up, look at the whole big picture instead of these