

itemization shall be submitted to the Legislative Fiscal Analyst by February 1, 1987." Senators, I don't know if any of you have looked at the handouts I have given. I would point out that the Omaha Public Schools, when I wrote them last summer, sent me back a response telling that we have three high schools in Omaha with swimming pools, seven junior highs, making a total of ten swimming pools. And then for tennis courts we have three high schools and three junior highs and two elementary schools where we are teaching tennis for a total of eight schools in Omaha teaching tennis. And then the number of schools which have parking lots total 79. The thing that amazes me the most out of the 79 is 58 of them are elementary schools where they are not even old enough to drive. I can only assume then that those parking lots are made available for the staff and there is a notation on this letter that the cost of constructing one of the parking lots, the one at Western Hills, was \$54,977, almost \$55,000. I don't really see that parking lots, swimming pools and tennis courts are directly attributable to the cost of education and I would think that if the school boards were really serious in Omaha, again, I do not talk about any of the other districts because I do not know the pertinent facts there, that when they talk about cutting the budget they would look at some of these things. They built them and now they have to maintain them. I have no idea what it costs to heat a swimming pool but I can guess that by the time they pay for the...Mr. Chairman, could I have a little help here?

SENATOR CARSTEN: (Gavel.) Would you please pay attention to what is being said and try and keep the noise level down. I know it seems like I'm a crank, but it is difficult both for the speaker and for those that want to listen. You may proceed, Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I merely want to make this point as I tried earlier today when Senator DeCamp introduced his original amendment. We're getting blamed, Senators, over and over again for raising property taxes and what I have just handed out to you show the Legislature is not to blame but the misconception persists. We have given state aid every year that I have been here and yet I have not seen a reduction in property taxes. In fact, the second handout I gave shows that in Douglas County in two years we had a 30.5 percent rise in property values. And this year when our school board considered cutting their budget, the school superintendent first came out with a list of \$5,100,000 in cuts. What they actually cut was 127,000 and an additional 500,000 from construction.