

wise thing in the world to allow local subdivisions to share in state tax bases. But the fact is that is a decision that has been made, and it was made sometime ago, and I see that probably there is no going back on that short of a revamp of the entire state tax system, which again is a worthy goal, something that politically I don't know if that is possible. My support for this proposal is based on a very simple premise and that is that it was voted in by the people of the City of Omaha. Now you can argue that the turnout was low, which it was. You can argue that the tax did not, that the approval for this did not come by a very big margin, and it did not, but the fact is that a vote was taken, the people did approve it, and, essentially, this is an approval of the people in the City of Omaha to tax themselves, and that being the case, with the specific projects that were listed, I think that it is incumbent upon the Legislature and Nebraska to allow the people in the City of Omaha to do that within the very strict and narrow confines of this amendment. Now the...some of the opponents of this, not just Senator Hall, make the point that perhaps this is not the wisest use of these tax dollars, to renovate the civic auditorium, which may not be worth renovating at this point. In fact, in the Revenue Committee, I argued that you ought to expand the use of this to include perhaps a new football stadium, which was being discussed at the time, about for a Canadian football league franchise, and I still think that that's a legitimate use of these funds, and, in fact, as the bill originally came in, that would have been allowed with or without my amendment. This is a more restrictive approach, which I support, nonetheless. But the fact is you need to look at a lot of things in the City of Omaha. You need to look at a new convention center. You need to look at perhaps a sports arena at a location outside of downtown, but the fact is that because the voters approved this, because it is something that would be used for projects that are...I don't think there is any question that the projects are needed. There may be some question as to the wisdom of the expenditure, but I think there is no doubt, anyone who has been in the civic auditorium in recent years would have to admit that if that facility is going to be continued to be used, it does need to be renovated, it does need to have some dollars committed to it becoming a good facility. It is a facility that is used by a number of entities. Creighton University basketball team plays there. There are conventions there. There are sporting events there involving high school teams in the Omaha area. It does need, if it is going to continue to be used, we need to, we being not