

straightforward. One, the sales tax is not being assessed now. This is one-half cent that is not being assessed at the present time. Two, the state will actually receive \$600,000 in sales tax collection fee that it would not get anyway. I mean this is \$600,000 that can be added in that would not be received during this one year because Omaha is assessing a tax on itself. So that actually improves the financial status of the state by \$600,000. Thirdly, and I went over, if the sales tax is a regressive tax and it is a tax that should not be assessed by the State of Nebraska as a matter of policy, then we are going to have to reverse a trend of tax law that has been going on in this state since 1969, or whatever the year was, and I probably don't have the year exactly right. We made that decision then. Lastly, Senator Chambers, on the issue of the voters in the City of Omaha's decision, you argued, and I have agreed with you on district elections. We elect city councilpersons by district.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR ASHFORD: They came together and they voted for this initiative and then gave it to the voters to vote on, at the suggestion of the Omaha delegation, and I admit, Senator Chambers, not including you, but the Omaha delegation suggesting to the city council that that is how they proceed. District elections occurred, city councilpersons are elected, they went through the process of voting for this sales tax. It then came down to the...it went to the voters and then came down to the Legislature, a process that the Omaha delegation suggested to the city that it utilize. The arguments about the sales tax, the sales tax base are all good fodder for debate, but I think that they are red herrings when we consider this particular proposal. This is a specific proposal that is the result of legislative action on the Omaha auditorium issue that has been going on for five years. It didn't get just dropped on us out of the blue, but it is an initiative we have discussed throughout the Nebraskaplex process, the battles between the city and the county over buying Ak-Sar-Ben.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Time.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Ashford. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Madam President and members.