

SENATOR MOORE: Time, Senator Wickersham. The next speaker is Senator Hall.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President and members. Again, I rise in support of Senator Chambers' motion to reconsider the sales tax. It is not an issue of do we not understand that the people of Omaha have voted for this, do we not feel that that vote was taken in good faith? It still becomes a question of the Legislature has the duty, we have the authority, we have the ability to decide on whether or not the sales tax will be given for this measure. It was a unique situation that took place that had the vote on this measure actually come before the authority was given. I can't think of an example where the Legislature did not first of all give the authority for a local subdivision of government, basically cities, they are the only ones that have it, to have the sales tax, to a certain extent, whether it be a half cent, or one cent, or one and a half, the increments that it grew. First it passed the threshold or the hurdle of the Legislature, and then it was voted on at the local level. What happened was folks looked at the issue of the city council or the city civic center renovation and they said that the issue probably should be voted on first, and then we will take it to the folks in Lincoln. We had a local city election where there was less than a majority of the folks who are registered to vote in Omaha came out and voted on this proposal, far less. It was supported, but it was supported knowing full well that it then had to get the blessing of the Nebraska Legislature. So to use the argument that this somehow is preordained to take place because there was an election is looking with closed eyes at how the process works. This proposal, like every other proposal, has to pass muster in this body. I understand that it was supported narrowly in Omaha, did not happen to pass by, in my district, which is not of any concern to me. I don't support it whether it would have passed 95 to 5, and it had...the ironic thing is is that all the money is going to be spent in my district. The proposal has to be dealt with on its face, and I think Senator Wickersham pointed out a study that was done by the mayor's own group, and I was glad that he brought it forth and it didn't have to be myself because it was highlighted in yellow, not just in black underline in my copy, Senator Wickersham, but the proposal clearly stated that what we need to do is move forward in Omaha for a convention center. And I believe that that is the path that we have to take. The problem with the current facility is that it is a hodgepodge of buildings that have been pieced