MISSOURI LVT BILL BEATEN AT THE WIRE

It was a cliff-hanger, but in the end time ran out on Missouri's land-value tax bill.

On March 2nd, the Missouri bill (HJR # 63) was reported favorably out of committee by a strong 8 to 1 vote, and was passed by the state's House of Representatives one month later by a vote of 95 to 48. Twenty-eight days remained until the end of the session to secure passage by the state senate.

The bill was referred to the Senate Ways and Means Committee on April 5th. Don Killoren, Walt Mueller and Stan Fredericksen presented the bill to the committee on April 11th and reported a generally favorable response. But the railroad lobby began the following day working in earnest against the LVT bill.

Nevertheless, the Ways and Means Committee reported favorably on the bill and put it on the Senate calendar for debate. But HJR # 63 was soon in line for debate when the body adjourned at midnight on April 30th.

House sponsor Walt Mueller plans to reintroduce the bill next January, and is confident that things will go better. For one thing, the term "site-value taxation" became a meaningful and understandable phrase this year. For another, the assembly conducts a six-month session next year, as opposed to the four-month session recently completed. The extra time will allow for more legislation.

OTHER NOTES FROM....

CALIFORNIA

Assemblyman Bill Filante introduced a bill (3890) to the California legislature calling for "separarte property tax rates for real property classified as land and real property classified as improvements." It would also "permit the suspension, in whole or in part, of the rate applicable to improvements generally with respect to new improvements."

The bill would require a popular vote to enact the two-tiered system.

NEBRASKA

Time ran out on a number of resolutions which would have put an LVT proposal on the ballot for a constitutional ammendment this fall.

However, the legislature did pass a resolution to "study current and proposed methods of valuation of land for property tax purposes."

Specifically, the resolution refers to "ideas and issues presented" in a resolution on land-value taxes -- so a door has been left open for the state's LVT advocates.