

companies appeared against it and your amendment took out the, or somebody's amendment, the committee amendment removed Cable Television from the definition of public service entity. This ensures that Cable Television companies will not be subject to the franchise tax. I presume they're subject to some other tax someplace else. Why was it that it's a telephone company and other companies that you mentioned say this is such a horrendous mess, none of them appeared on this bill, if you know?

SPEAKER NICHOL: Would you like to respond, Senator Vard Johnson?

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Yes. The Department of Revenue have been working on this bill last summer and fall and they had had all their meetings with the phone company and affected counties and cities last fall and they literally had an agreed to bill with the phone company last fall and it no longer was necessary for the phone company to appear because the Department of Revenue could appear and simply make the representation.

SENATOR HIGGINS: So they were there saying, we've worked it out with the phone companies.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Right.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Now did I understand that we're not going to tax these people...we're going to change the taxing system on the utilities companies?

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Yes, but the dollar amounts will be the same. We will collect the same dollar amounts, but the method of valuation will be uniform throughout the state.

SENATOR HIGGINS: That's a promise.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: That was the promise made to me by the Revenue Department.

SENATOR HIGGINS: So we're not going to change it in such a way that the utilities are going to get a tax break?

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: No, ma'am.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Okay, I'll trust Senator Johnson and I