

CLERK: I have no further amendments to the bill, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Okay, on the advancement of the bill, Senator Hefner.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to add my name to this bill.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Did you wish to speak about...?

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I move for the advancement of the bill.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Okay. Senator Landis, Senator Hefner, Senator Marsh, Senator Vard Johnson. Okay, Senator Vard Johnson, you're the last name.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Inasmuch as I am the last name, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, and have yet to speak on this bill, I thought I would take a few moments to indicate why I'm going to vote against LB 911, because I'm a member of the Miscellaneous Subjects Committee. I didn't introduce this bill. I introduced absolutely no liquor bills, but I heard the testimony that was offered to the Miscellaneous Subjects Committee by the League of Municipalities, by a number of liquor retailers, by a member of the Liquor Control Commission and what I learned through the course of the testimony is that the local control issue turns, to a large extent, on city councils that fail to take positions on license approvals or denials, that fail to garner a majority of votes and that then complain bitterly to the Liquor Control Commission when the Liquor Control Commission notes from the underlying record that the city council has simply not taken an action, not done an action by a majority vote. It neither granted nor denied the application for a liquor license. I learned that local governments sometimes give way to some very local and narrow interests, that is some existing licensees who want to protect exactly what they have and want absolutely no newcomer in that community. What I also learned is that the state's system that we so painstakingly created over the last 40 years has worked to arrive at a reasonable balance between the number of outlets and the amount of liquor consumed, tried to protect against monopolistic practices, tried to a large extent to accommodate the needs of the public, and to balance those needs against people who wished entry into the liquor market. I learned that