

are using it. And they don't...they were able to collect, I think, \$24,000 the past year. They're out asking for it again but they don't know how long they're going to be able to continue to do this. So what they're asking is for the opportunity to raise that fee up, and I think if you look in the middle of that piece of paper, it says the system we have is a tremendous asset to us and the communities we serve. On a number of occasions, the enhanced part of our system has proven to have saved lives and we feel we are...if we are to survive financially, we need the Legislature to help us. So Senator Hillman introduced a bill...and, by the way, Senator Hillman was going to be here to explain these two bills being put together as one, but I understand that Senator Hillman is in an emergency room at the local hospital and so is not able to be here to assist in the presentation of this...of this piece of legislation. At any rate, what the committee amendments would do, would allow the surcharge to go up to...or I mean the bill would do, allow the surcharge to go up to a limit of 50 cents more than they are now being able to pay, only after a public notice is given in local newspapers for three consecutive weeks and public hearing is held by the county board for input. And, by the way, having served on the county board for a number of years, I have faith that the county board is there for the purpose of listening to what the people want and what they expect and would certainly act in their behalf if they were to pass on a three-fourths vote in order to implement this increase in the cost. Obviously, there will be some objection, as there is in any kind of increase in funding for any services that we try to provide. But, here again, I think it's the duty and the obligation of the local people in the community or in that county or in that area that's being served to voice their opinions, and I'm sure that in all cases the county board would respond to those requests. After the...I guess, do we want to continue on the amendments or do you want to continue on the discussion on the bill? I have to indicate to you that my own county a few years...a couple or four or five years ago when this first...when this bill was first introduced at the 50-cent limit, we attempted to install a 911 system and found out that the 50-cent limit for the number of telephones that we would be involved in would not be able to provide the service and pay for it and so it was never implemented. At the present time, there are a number of areas in the state that are talking about the combining of counties in areas, fire districts, etcetera, for the purpose of being able to raise more money to meet the...to meet the costs of this system. And, as I said before, the new