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Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

May 6, 2003

LB 283

committee amendments, beer, which is currently taxed at 23 cents per gallon, would be at 29; wine, which is currently taxed at 75 cents, would be at 95 cents. We have a distinguishing characteristic in our statute in that we create a different tier for fortified wine, and this does away with that. So we move the fortified wine, which is now \$1.35, down to 95 cents. Fortified wine is a very meager amount of the alcohol that's sold in this state. Farm wine goes from 5 cents to 6 cents, and spirits, hard liquor, goes from \$3.00 to \$3.75. That will be if the committee amendments are adopted. To the extent that there are folks out in the lobby that speak here, the wine and spirits people have agreed to these terms. The beer people have maintained opposition. Although I think that they could have been working much... I mean, you would have seen more activity if this wasn't an acceptable, or liveable result, let me put it that way. I don't think there's an agreement, but I think it's a liveable result, even from the beer folks' perspective. Otherwise you would have been flooded by this time with e-mails and letters. I am going to suggest that we adopt the committee amendments to in fact carry out the amounts that I just told you. Then I'm going to ask that we adopt another amendment with some other money saving elements in it. And the reason that I do that to this bill is because this bill is written to increase these taxes July 1. July 1 would require the E clause, and then the delayed operative date of July 1 upon being passed. That will mean that between July 1 and the only other "non-E clause" option, or the other E clause option that makes sense, which is October 1, we will be able to raise and secure these higher taxes, which is about a million dollars; these, essentially, from parties who have agreed to these terms. And in fact, a couple of them have said that July 1 is easier to implement than October 1. The earlier, actually, the better; not the worse. That being the case, I'd like to make sure that we have a vehicle out there that the body might be inclined to give 33 votes to that gets the maximum amount of revenue, and that would be to do this with the E clause. I would ask for the advancement of LB 283. And I'll take up the committee amendment when called upon by the Clerk.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Landis. (Doctor of the day introduced.) Senator Landis, you'd be recognized to open on the