

bottom of the pile.

SPEAKER MARVEL: I guess I would warn you that we are getting to the stage where we can't pass over things. What is it, on page 635, you wish to...do you have another amendment you wish to take up? Okay. Is there another amendment Senator Wesely has?

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Wesely moves to strike all amendments previously adopted to LB 499.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, we have spent a lot of time with this bill. It has gone through a lengthy process of amendment. We have changed it around and changed it around and have been chasing our tail with this legislation and I got a chance to take a look at the original bill as introduced and find that perhaps we were better off with where we started than where we are at. There are some problems with the original bill but I think basically there are some fundamental questions that I know many of you have talked to me about concerning the key provision of the amendments the committee has adopted and which this floor has agreed to concerning the two percent county option on this tax. Basically the lodging tax is a sales tax. The sales tax has been in the past and I think should continue to be a state tax, a state administered tax. We have made an exception in the case of some cities. I think that perhaps has been a mistake but we shouldn't make the same mistake, if it is one, by allowing counties the option of imposing what is essentially a sales tax on lodging and so that is my basic, fundamental, philosophical concern and I know that many of you share that concern. So the question then is, how do we allow the establishment of a lodging tax to promote tourism in Nebraska, which I think is a worthy goal, at the same time allow some sort of local option on using that funding to promote local attractions in tourism but not give up the state control and authority on a tax that has been essentially a state tax. And essentially, the motion before you, returning to LB 499 as originally introduced would I think deal with those concerns and those problems and yet meet those goals. What we would essentially do by going to the bill as originally introduced is we would have a 3% tax state administered. The state would collect the lodging tax, would use 1% of it for the state fund that would be used to promote tourism for the state, and then a local county option.