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LB 905

Blue Shield and the premium tax quite simply works the same here as it does for IRAs. Parity would be between fraternal and these kind of medical organizations and in the end, you know, the consumer pays these bills. That is the argument that you hear all the time and I think there is some truth to that, especially in terms of this exemption and if we are going to exempt we ought to make this a much more meaningful exemption. We ought to add some more people who will benefit from this kind of an exemption and consequently I think that this is legitimate. I urge the body to accept this amendment. It is fair. It is as fair as any of our other taxes or our other tax exemptions and with that I would urge the body to accept this amendment and advance the bill.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Kelly.

SENATOR KELLY: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I would talk very briefly to Senator Newell's amendment to expand the exemption to include Blue Cross-Blue Shield, who, as I have been led to believe, violently oppose the Newell amendment. We have the case of the horseless rider charging on his steed to rescue the damsel in distress who doesn't want rescued. So obviously Newell's amendment is an harassment of the bill which is very cleverly done, but recognize it for what it is, as a harassment of the bill to start talking about taxing insurance companies rather than taxing, which is the real truth, taxing those people who are attempting to set up tax free retirement accounts for themselves and have the state tax the money that is going into their tax free account. Later I would talk to the bill but with those few remarks, please defeat Senator Newell's amendment as he would like to have it defeated.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Dworak.

SENATOR DWORAK: I call for the question.

PRESIDENT: Do I see five hands? I do. The question then is, shall debate cease. All those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Have you all voted? Record the vote.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 4 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Motion carries. Debate ceases. Senator Newell, you may close on your motion to amend.

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President, members of the body, I just went back out to talk to the lobbyist for Blue Cross-