

March 10, 1981

LB 151

SENATOR JOHNSON: No, it is permissive.

SENATOR BARRETT: It is permissive.

SENATOR JOHNSON: Right.

SENATOR BARRETT: Thank you very much.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Johnson, do you want to close?

SENATOR JOHNSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. A number of members have raised questions about this bill. I can certainly appreciate virtually every question that has been raised because I think they are all good questions. Let me start with the last question first and that is Senator Barrett's comment that this constitutional amendment is permissive as opposed to mandatory. In other words, when the voters passed constitutional amendment three they just said the Legislature may provide by law some exemptions with respect to alternate energy sources and that is a discretionary act but the truth of the matter was, is that that bill passed, or that constitutional amendment passed two to one. That was the greatest supported constitutional amendment we had the last time around and without any question the voters were showing to us their concern, their concern, over our need to conserve gas and oil. So, I think that you and I engage in an act of pretty high responsibility when we come up with a bill such as 151 which is a very modest price tag, which very thoughtfully implements the constitutional amendment and you should be mindful of the fact that this bill does not provide that there shall be an eternal exemption from the property tax. It only limits the life of the exemption for five years. You should be mindful of the fact that this bill does not allow in a sense a credit against the property tax of the full value of the alternate energy resource. It only allows the exemption of whatever increase in valuation might occur by virtue of the use of the new facility. This bill is a very conservative, very cautious bill. I should say, incidentally, that when Mr. Palmer from the State Energy Office testified on behalf of the bill, he said that if we limit the life of the exemption to five years we would have the Governor's support. So, what we have here is we have a bill that I think addresses an issue in a responsible fashion and not a profligate fashion. Now let me talk about the mish mash of standards. Please be mindful of the fact, Senator Kahle and others who are concerned about this, that the standards in this bill for the... the definition of this bill of alternate energy sources are those already in our law under our sales tax program and our sales tax exemption program is administered by the