

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I have four reasons that I am going to vote against doing anything other than passing the bill on Final in its present form. Number one reason, this is precisely what the Newell amendment is, an issue that has been fought for years here. In other words, with the amendment even though it is indirect, the Legislature now becomes the rate-setter for all practical purposes on taxes. We have taken the authority away and said, you will do this at a minimum. In other words, we are saying, you will increase taxes at a minimum, so on and so forth. And then after that the only amount is how much the increase is. So, number one, the Legislature, even though it is indirect and disguised by means of the amendment, is taking the authority for tax-setting and putting it in the Legislature and, quite frankly, on the basis of information I have been provided, I don't have the information to say what the tax rate should or should not be, as I suggested before, nor do I suspect does any other member of the body. Proof of that... proof of that, approximately one week or ten days ago we were asked to increase from 15 to 16 so that we could have a \$773 million budget. Ten days later we found now supposedly the reason for the increase is a shortfall of \$10 million or so. This happens pretty fast in here. Every week or ten days, you are going to tell me you now have the knowledge to say what these amounts should be with the tax rates. That is reason number one. Reason number two, the first thing you do or should be doing in here is determining what your needs... what your needs are, absolute needs. How much does your University need? How much do your roads need? How much do your social programs need? Deal with that first, then say, and to accomplish these goals which we say are absolutely necessary, we need this much money. If they are really honest, legitimate needs, you do that first, then you raise your money for them. Third reason, in all honesty I believe the 15 versus 16 percent has become identical to Porkchop Hill in Kagsanh. Porkchop Hill, as you know, was a hill over in Korea where the United States for the sake of taking the hill and proving that we could take a hill, sacrificed hundreds of American lives and then a few days later after they had captured the hill they turned around and said, it didn't matter anyway and they turned it back over to the enemy. Kaysann in Vietnam was where the marines to prove they were tough sacrificed hundreds of American lives so that they could prove that we could hold onto this one little rice paddy area and then the day after we had successfully held onto it after weeks of fighting and sacrifice, we turned it over to the