

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, I'd challenge the ruling of the Chair and then I would go on to explain the amendment and try to justify why I think it is within the call.

SENATOR LAMB: Please proceed.

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, we have been called here for what has been identified as a fiscal crisis. As most of you know the Chinese language uses pictures to describe words. The two pictures that are some four thousand years old that describe crisis are these pictures, one that means danger and one that means opportunity because that is what a crisis is, a dangerous opportunity, and I believe that is what we are here for, to address a dangerous situation and also to have the opportunity to really address it and solve at this time. Last year you may recall, I pretty much tried to handle the Governor's proposals and in my final talk to the Legislature, after doing every single thing the Governor asked and pushing those things through in record time, the shortest special session ever, I did give this warning and I think it is important today. I said I sincerely hope the proposals that we would pass if we advance this, the bills last year, I hope it works and I mean that in all sincerity. However, I do want to say I expressed grave personal reservations about the analysis of the economy of Nebraska, now and in the future by the officials, I regretfully believe that we may be entering something more akin to a depression than a mild recession and if that does indeed occur, we will know it pretty well by February, March, et cetera, and we may have to take some pretty dramatic action. And I would submit to you, gentlemen, that that is what we should probably be doing here, is taking that bold, yes, action that has to be done overall to address this true crisis. Here is what I am afraid of. I'm afraid that we're going to simply shift to property taxes which are already incredibly high, the expenditures that we are going to be cutting or in the alternative on those things that affect the state, the University, et cetera, we're going to make massive cuts now which will simply show up in the form of hemorrhaging arteries and double trouble come next January, February, March when we are here in session. I don't believe that if we go to a straight tax increase it makes sense anymore because we are talking astronomical numbers completely different than what was originally anticipated. So I would suggest that it is time to consider a bold, new approach, an approach the other states have used and to recognize reality. Reality is if you have ten people in a room and only five of them are paying taxes and you have to raise more money for all ten and you place the additional tax strictly on the five, it is going to hurt them. The other solution is to try to bring all ten people into the taxpaying process. That is what a sales tax on services is, on legal fees, on accounting fees, yes, on barbering and some of those things, on automobile repairs. And I think it is particularly appropriate in the economy of the 1982 to the 1990s when the economy has so much shifted to a service type industry in many cases as opposed to the 1970s when everything was a new purchase, the new car, the new combine, the new tractor. Now there is a tendency to take that money that normally would be