

don't know if I'm going to lose votes by adding this to the bill or gain. It is a difficult issue. But be that as it may, I will oppose Senator Conway's amendment because the bill does allow for local option. If you take a look at the bill, a county board would have to have a public hearing on this, they would have to vote on it to implement it. They could implement it now with the committee amendments, as LB 262 has been amended, up to 2 percent, so it could be anywhere from 1/2, 1 to 2, I guess and I think that that probably is the way the bill should remain. The same issue was brought up in 1980 when I think the lodging tax, which was originally introduced and passed by this body, because it was felt at that time that it was also basically a Douglas County problem or an issue. If you take a look at that handout that I gave you today, it shows clearly that at least 30 other counties have decided that this is a funding mechanism that they feel is viable for promotion of their areas. They want to bring people in, they want people to come in, enjoy themselves and spend dollars in their counties. The tax that we would apply, add in addition to 262, is one that would allow for those counties to make improvements to those facilities that attract those visitors to their areas. I think that I feel comfortable with the local option, I feel comfortable with the fact that the county board would hold a public hearing on this issue, that they would be held accountable at the local level, and that the vote would be open and I'm sure very well reported at that local level. So, with that, although I understand Senator Conway's amendment and do appreciate it, I would oppose it at this time. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Chambers, on the amendment, Senator Korshoj next.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I'm going to be as direct as I can. Senator Schmit, may I ask you a question to see if I got the sense of what you were asking?

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Schmit, would you respond?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Were you asking, in the event Senator Conway's amendment is attached, could Douglas County give money from the fund produced to other counties or areas, if they chose? Was that your question?