

and McFarland. Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, Mr. President and members, I do not like to oppose each and every amendment which is being offered here this afternoon. Senator Dierks said these amendments were offered before the committee and were rejected by the committee and individuals feel strongly enough about them to reoffer them again at this time. That is his right, it's the right of each and every member to do that which they deem to be their own individual responsibility. It is also my responsibility to do that which I believe to be right. We reviewed these amendments. We reviewed these proposals. Senator Dierks proposes that five communities, five counties be allowed to vote. I read the amendment several times. I do not know how, for certain, those five counties are to be determined. Would he leave it up to the Department of Environmental Control to determine which five counties were to vote? Would the three counties which are presently host sites be automatically located...would they automatically be included among the five? Would the other two counties be chosen based upon the safety of a site located within their relative area? How many of you here, if the voters in four counties rejected the site and the voters in the least desirable county accepted the site, how many of you would want to store the waste in the site or on the site which is least safe of the five? If there is a legitimate logical concern, then had it not ought to be stored where it is the safest? I am not a geologist, all of you know that, but there are those who we rely upon with professional experience to tell us where is the most logical place to store the material based upon its long life and based upon safety to the public. That has been the number one goal, I believe, of the committee, the number one goal of this Legislature, has been the number one goal of everyone involved in the site selection process. We can disagree with how it was done, we can disagree with the conclusion, but if we begin to disagree with the good intentions and the honest integrity of those individuals involved, then there is no end to it. If Senator Dierks was to challenge my integrity and I challenge his, what is to be gained from that kind of a challenge? It's a standoff and no one gains. If, in fact, we were to do what Senator Dierks points out here, it would delay the process to a point where you might really find yourself in some difficulty. I do not know, I'm not involved in the process to that extent, but I can understand and I can envision when you review the difficulty that we have incurred so far, that if you were to go back and reopen the discussion and