

million dollars, even though Senator Schmit says the bill deals with small operations, I have to think that, unfortunately, in today's age that a million dollars isn't all that much money anymore. With that, I would respectfully vote to overrule the Chair's germaneness issue. Thank you.

PPRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Elmer, please, followed by Senator Scofield.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Mr. President and Senator Schmit and Senator Hall. The original intent of this bill is to give an opportunity for small businesses to bid on state projects. That's the original intent and the purpose of LB 257. The intent of this amendment is to provide environmental...some sort of an assurance that environmental cleanups would be handled by this bond that I don't think can even be bought. Therefore, I would suggest that this is entirely two different subjects and departs substantially from the original intent of the bill and would certainly support the overrule of the Chair motion.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Scofield, please.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. President and members. If you look at this amendment carefully, it doesn't really go out into the directions I think that is being represented here by the people who are making the motion to overrule the Chair. We're simply looking at bonding mechanisms here and ways of protecting the public interest. The fact that we happened to set a particular threshold here for certain projects that require a particular bond in no way goes beyond our germaneness rules in this body. And I would suggest to you beyond that that it is being suggested here that you can't get a bond for a million dollars. I have a brother-in-law, I guess now I have to call him a brother-in-law once removed, but nevertheless he is still in the construction business. It's not that difficult to get a million dollar bond and so I don't think that's a valid argument at all. Also, the example given about the pharmacy building, frankly, the problem we ran into with the pharmacy building was the statute of repose which essentially lets people off the hook after 10 years. We ought to look at that, as well, to protect again the taxpayers. Finally, I guess I would make the point here that this is not a vast departure from the purposes of 257, which I perceive is protection of the public through the bonding mechanism and I would suggest to you that if no company, if no surety will write an environmental bond for one of these kinds