

committee amendments were mailed out to everybody who had an...we thought might have an interest in testifying at the committee hearing. And we asked people, at the committee hearing, to please address themselves to the committee amendments. So a lot of those Class I folks, who are listed there on the committee statement that were there at the committee hearing, did in fact know what the committee amendments are and they did in fact indicate yes, they could live with those. Admittedly the Class I folks were not jumping up and down, turning cartwheels, saying it's the greatest idea in the world. But they did tell us at that time, on that date, that this looks like a resolution to the issue, so let's support it. Senator Lamb is right, this amendment gets to the heart of the bill. Frankly, it gets to the heart of the bill so much that I really don't know what we have left anymore without this. Basically, what we have without...with this amendment goes on, basically what we have is a bill that preserves the status quo and puts a new name on it. This is the essence of, and I don't want to use the word compromise necessarily, because this is not, this is not something that is the product of people hammering something out. He is correct in that statement. But in my mind it is the middle ground that preserves the best of both arguments. An ideal middle ground is one where the item that is most important to one side is preserved, and the item that is most important to the other side is preserved, and the two can live side by side. That is what we have with LB 259 as it currently stands. We have heard, for years and years and years, from the pro reorganization people, you've got to have reorganization because of the gross tax inequities that exist. I have not, at this time, burdened you with lots of information about the tax inequities that exist within Class I school districts. You all know what it is. If you want it refreshed, we can certainly get more of that information. Tax inequities, it's Class I's versus other forms of organization, are tremendous. And I know you can parade in a Class I here or there that has a higher tax levy than neighboring districts. But by and large they are tremendous. On other other end you've heard the Class I's say, leave us alone, we don't care about taxes, we want to keep our schools open. That is what this amendment does. What this amendment does is it sets up a taxing structure that frankly is very similar to what would be there if we had a merge situation; that everybody within an affiliated unit will pool their tax askings together and their property will be taxed to support that combined effort. But within that combined area, those Class I schools are going to maintain their