

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, I rise to support LB 260 as has been amended by the committee amendments. And I really appreciate Senator Chambers' comments because, Senator Chambers, I clearly don't want to leave the impression that I think that this is going to be a godsend with regard to the drug war. Clearly, it is nothing more than a fly, I guess, on a horse's backside, but it is that much and it is one more fly than we currently have in place. Your questions...your exchange with Senator Conway, I think, was a good one but the fact of the matter is that tax is going to be imposed on the individual who is selling those drugs and will that affect the rate of exchange, the price? I don't know. I don't think there is any way anybody can tell that. I think there are other influences out there in that marketplace that would directly impact what the sale price is going to be as opposed to a tax that we impose here if that individual is caught would have on the transaction. So I don't think that would have probably much of any impact on what the street price is going to be. What I would tell you is that when they...I think it was Mr. Sanft, who came down from Minnesota and testified in front of the committee, said was that the proposal did work and that it paid for itself in the first year. And the first year I think they raised approximately \$67,000, and the second year it was somewhere in the neighborhood of \$300,000 that was raised through this tax and that it still allowed for the local subdivisions of government to seize the property, the car, for example, that the drug was being transported in, and sell that, keep those monies at the local level, whereas a tax was imposed on that individual who was in possession and was selling these drugs. So it was over and above that, allowed for another little gnat to bother that drug dealer, to use an analogy that Senator Chambers likes to use at times when he feels something isn't as effective as it should be. I would...I guess I would just say that, unfortunately, at this point in time we don't have an effective measure that would, even to my liking, be able to curtail the use of drugs that we have in 260. I think, as I have stated a number of times, education and prevention are the best form of defense against this kind of an enemy and it will continue to be a problem. All LB 260 purports to do is attempt to take away some of that ill-gotten gain from those individuals who traffic in this area. The tax will do that. It will hit them where it hurts, so to speak. They're in it for one reason and one reason only, for financial gain. We take a little bit of that away in LB 260, not as much as I would probably like but a lot more than the bill would have as it was originally