

money going to the people will be less and will hurt the people. We can't hurt the people, therefore, we must protect our money that we're getting illegally. It's a warped, circular logic. This Legislature is in such a corner that there is no way out, without hurting the people, period. That's how bad the tax policy is. When you're in a corner, and I wish Senator Moore was here, I'd tell him what my father told me a long time ago. There are two things you can do, number one, if you've taken something from someone else illegally, and you've found that it is improper for you to have it, you give it back, and you try to show a little extra kindness for that, but you give it back no matter how hard it hurts,...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: ...because it's not yours. That's the way it is with tax money right now. The second thing is when you're in a corner and there is no way to go but to hurt, you have to do what is right. In a democratic system where apparently we are supposed to trust, take care and trust, and trust the money that has been given to us. We have no right to keep that money on the pretense of protecting government, because if we profess that the government is the people, then by giving the money back to the people we are not, in fact, decreasing government, we are establishing exactly what we are, a democratic country that does things properly with our people's money. And, if we've messed up, we will then have to come back and correct the system, which is what we have to do. I urge the body to support the Withem amendment because of what we are, not because of what we are afraid of. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Smith, please, followed by Senators Kristensen and Hannibal.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm standing here as a person who knows not very much about taxes and tax law, and I'd be the very first person to admit that. But I'll tell you right now, and on the surface, Senator Withem, what you're proposing sounded good to me and sounded fair. But in talking, and again I have to admit that I've gone out and talked with lobbyists who represent the cities and the counties, who are the reasons that I thought we were down here, to try to prevent further erosion. I am one of the people, also, who very loudly and specifically have said over, and over, and over again throughout this whole interim no way, I'm not...I don't want to be a part of a Special