

Senator Withem has raised a good point. I think there are a lot...several issues involving LB 7 that need to be discussed. He indicated in his address that he didn't know whether or not he was going to support LB 7 or not. And I think that's an excellent point. I think possibly the reason he says that is we really haven't given a good reason in our debate to either support or not support LB 7. The reason I'm going to support LB 7 is because I do believe that the state, from my reading of the cases, that the state does have the ability to make the classification that it's made, legally. I still have a problem with the conclusion that we reached that we must value railroad property or this type of railroad property at zero, or exclude it from tax. I think there are other options that we could look at, tax it at a lower rate, for example, tax it at 25 percent of value, reflective of potentially the differentiation between 75 percent of personal property that is taxed, not taxed, and 25 percent that is taxed, arrive at a value, for example, consistent with the Union Pacific or the railroad settlement with the state. I believe the settlement was 25 percent. I think there is an awful lot of discussion that could be had over how we deal with railroad property. And I don't think it's necessarily required that we simply exempt it, at least I think we should have some discussion over it so when we make our decision, to vote...to go ahead and vote it forward, that we know that we've talked about all of the potential options, because we're going to have to do that in the future. I guess I would ask Senator Withem a question.

PRESIDENT: Senator Withem, would you respond, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: I'll certainly try.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Could you tell me, Senator Withem, what concerns you have you're still trying to decide, because I'd like to know. Maybe I have...I should have some concerns that you have. (Laughter.)

SENATOR WITHEM: Yeah, I guess the questions that have been raised to me are twofold. Maybe I'd prefer...I see Senator Hartnett's light is on. Part of my concerns were raised in the memo he sent around. Another one is whether or not this particular court, with its makeup and its history of decisions, is going to accept anything other than our actually getting into our tax system and formulating a fairer tax system. I think that's the message that they have sent to us. And passing this