

bidding process takes place, and I am just curious if Senator Schellpeper or Senator Johnson, one or the other, can explain to me how this compares with other subdivisions of government, and how long this level has been there. I understand there are some things that it just doesn't pay to go out for bid. Other things, though, if you are...you know, \$100,000 is a fair amount of taxpayers' money to be spent without taking public bids on. So I'd appreciate from Senator Schellpeper a little discussion on that provision and why that particular measure is there, and you can use the rest of my time to comment on that.

SENATOR CONWAY: Senator Schellpeper.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you. Senator Withem, I served on the public power board in Stanton for about 20 years, and it seemed like the costs are just continually escalating, and it seemed like for \$50,000, you don't really save that much money by going out to bid because you only have about two companies that are bidding on most of this public power...or any kind of electrical supplies. And a transformer will be \$50,000, \$60,000, a lot of these here large transformers, and so I think the thought behind it is that, rather than to put out a bid where you only have one company bid, that we are just going to raise it to 100,000, so that if you get anything large, like any large construction or something, then you would do the bidding, out otherwise for the smaller things.

SENATOR WITHEM: Okay, I would have a follow-up question, if I could. Senator Lynch, I hate dragging you in the middle of this but I know you've had a bill a few years ago dealing with the County Purchasing Act. Could you tell me what the limitations are before you go for bid? As I remember you have an "informal" process versus formal bid, and what did we do in that bill a few years ago?

SENATOR LYNCH: Senator Withem and members of the Legislature, the County Purchasing Act provides for a maximum purchase of \$5,000 without public bids. If I could, in answer to your questions, I had my light on earlier. I will put it on again but I had the same concern about the \$50,000, Senator Schellpeper, up to a hundred. Probably could have an engine or a compressor that could cost that much. I don't know enough about their purchases to know whether that is legitimate, but it is an extraordinary amount of money to be able to spend without public bids, and I'd like to know a little bit more about it,