

not a thing that takes us a lot of time one way or another but that's the principle of the thing. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Beutler. I will now recognize Senator Withem, followed by Senator Kristensen. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Madam Chair, as one of the two sponsors of this bill who had not had an opportunity to see the amendment prior to it being placed on the desk here, I am standing in opposition to the adoption of this particular amendment. The reason for that is a little bit of the history of the development of this bill, some of the things that went on outside of the Chamber and not inside the Chamber. The question of how do you pay for 911 services was a tough issue, particularly out in Senator Baack's area of the state and somewhat less in my part of the...I got interested in this because in Sarpy County we were looking at enhanced 911, looked at this as a vehicle for paying for it. The bill hadn't passed yet, they found another vehicle for dealing with it when they were looking at it. But I got involved in the negotiations with the telephone companies, the telephone association, the local providers and this question of, first of all, should there be an access charge was a very tough question, that the telephone companies did not want to be in the position of being tax collectors. Ironically, one arm of the telephone companies was selling the service, wanting to be able to find a way to have it paid for. Another part of the telephone company didn't want to become in the role of being a tax collector. The question of how much you charge was a tough issue. Originally, the bill said 25 cents. It was tough negotiations to get it up to 50 cents. The question of how much you tax an individual, based on the number of lines they have in their house, is a question that ought not to be delegated to another body. A typical house that has three outlets in it, probably no big deal, an extra dollar and a half a month on my house to pay for 911 services, something I can probably readily and willingly afford. But what a business? What about a telecommunications company that has upwards to a hundred lines? We're talking about considerable sum of money. Now particularly if we take that authority away from the Legislature and give it to the Public Service Commission where, true, they can more expeditiously make these changes, I'm concerned about that. I'm concerned about a local subdivision that may decide that they want to enhance their 911 service by buying ambulances and buying other equipment, putting