

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. Chair, members of the body, just a couple of remarks to make. First of all, Senator Chambers made some reference to LB 232 applying to legislators, as if we're holding ourselves to different standards. It applies to all public officials, Governor included...is included under this. Secondly, the Beutler...I get real frustrated when this sort of thing happens. Current statute, the interpretation that the commission is using is honoraria are acceptable but they can't be just gifts they have to be for services rendered. What the Beutler amendment does is it says honoraria are in statute clearly defined as being acceptable but they have to be for services rendered. That's all Chris Beutler is doing with this amendment is placing into statute what is the current interpretation of the statute. Those who serve on the commission say there is some ambiguity. This year when they came through with things that they wanted, change in the accountability statute, this was one of them. By the way, 232 deals with a lot more than just honoraria. It deals with a number of other provisions dealing with our whole accountability systems, so a lot of good things in this bill other than this honoraria question. It's just not as big a deal as people are making of it. The final thing I wanted to explain, and then I will give Senator Chambers my time, was I think he gave us an excellent example of how we can...determination of value. He said before he came down here to speak, he used to get paid more than he did. That's a good standard for determination of value. After he was in the public eye and people knew more about him, the value of his speeches went down and that's probably appropriate. So, with that, Senator Chambers, you may use the rest of my time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you.

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Chambers, you have three minutes left.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Withem, being a modest man, I'm going to let what you said stand and people can formulate their own judgment. But I would like to ask Senator Beutler some very pointive questions now to try to make clear the point that I was hitting at earlier.

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Beutler, do you yield?