

it can be economically repaired and, in fact, have already entered into discussions with...

PRESIDENT MOUL: Time.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: ...bentonite shippers for that purpose.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Lamb.

SENATOR LAMB: Thank you, Madam Chair and members. We have discussed this proposition before, but I would just like to reiterate the important points, which are still valid. This amendment, which is being offered by Senator Wickersham, is pretty much technical in nature, and the basic deal is still the same, and that is that the state would provide the \$5 million for the acquisition. And then what we would say to those shippers, to those communities, to the operator of the line is that from there on it is your baby. You make it work. You make it work. If after five years, it is working, then you begin to pay back the railway council the money that the state has advanced. If it does not work, then we can begin to scrap the line, and the line is worth \$7.9 million as scrap. We are advancing \$5 million for acquisition. What a deal? Where else in state government or any kind of government can you make a deal like that where you have equity. You have equity in there that exceeds the amount of money that is to be advanced for the acquisition cost, and the state, under the amendment that Senator Wickersham has offered, is exempt from liability. And that was one of the provisions that the Governor insisted on, and that we certainly agree with that. You will note on your desk a letter that the Governor just wrote today supporting this proposal, supporting the proposal, and so I would ask you to adopt the amendment, and then, subsequently, advance the bill today.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Lamb. Senator Dierks, followed by Senator Wickersham. Sorry, Senator Kristensen after Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Madam President, members of the body, of course, I stand in support of this amendment and the bill. We have had quite a few meetings out in the districts that are concerned with this piece of legislation and we have had a