

people on the 3-R Commission and said, here, take a look at this. Coincidentally, about that time the Governor's office decided maybe we need to do this, this sort of thing. So it's something I've thought about a lot. And all along I've weighed is it better to correct an unfair tax system, or should we recognize that we're probably not going to have the will to correct that unfair tax system, and change the Constitution to legitimize what it is we're now doing. And that's really what the debate is. And on an hourly basis, practically, I go back and forth on that issue, and continue to go back and forth on that issue. What is tipping me in the direction of not supporting 186, even with all the ramifications that are out there, is the manner in which we, as a body, and we, as a state government, have responded to the crisis that is before us. And that is that we start out with brave talk about we're going to correct the errors in the tax system. We're going to create a system that is fair to everybody. We're going to establish a 3-R Commission, of which I am a member, and it is going to create a fair tax system. Yet, even in the face of what is probably the biggest property tax crisis that I can remember happening in this state, I guess I have a slight memory of back in the 1960's when the state tax system was repealed, but certainly wasn't involved with anything at that time. Even in the face of that crisis what have we done? We've accommodated the special interest, we've accommodated them. I'll go through a few examples, not necessarily in chronological order, even LR 186, when it came out, was going to put inventories in the Constitution. Senator Conway gave us a good rationale as to why that should be done, on the floor the other day. Immediately special interest says, nope, can't do that, need to put ours in, or not put anything in. It was taken out. We talked about putting everything back on the tax rolls as a temporary solution. Nope, can't do that. Got to do the other, we got to take everything off. But then we said, well, we'll do that temporarily, but as the hammer we'll make sure everything goes back on.

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR WITHEM: Nope, can't do that. Slowly but surely every time a special interest has needed something they've been accommodated. Even in the face of this crisis. Who has not been accommodated? Those individuals that are going to pay the higher property taxes because we've exempted everybody else, because we passed a constitutional amendment that legitimized