

created or extended, exemption on property tax. When we were at Select File a number of individuals expressed concern, myself among them, that we were stripping away a constitutional right, the equivalent of the equal protection clause as applied to property. And that causes a great deal of concern to me. If we are, in fact, going to strip away that constitutional right, I think it's only prudent to require that at least three-fifths of the body or that three-fifths of the members be required to vote before an exemption is created. We do have to offer some protection to people. Everybody in this Chamber knows what the Legislature can do, knows what kind of influences can come to bear upon us. And I think that we all know the effect or the difference between a 25-vote majority and a 30-vote majority, that 30 votes is not impossible to get and we've seen several instances tonight when we talk about veto overrides of getting 30 votes or upwards. If there is a good state policy, a good tax policy for creating an exemption, the 30 votes will be there. If there isn't, then we ought to make it just a little bit tougher to get that and it's certainly not impossible. We know that business interests will continue to have their lobbyists outside. They will always have that ability but we have to be concerned about those that don't have a lobbyist outside, that don't have somebody who is working to pay attention to what's going on to catch something that might be flying through. And that's the intent of this amendment. The intent of this amendment is to provide that protection, to make that bill to create an exemption be worked just a little bit harder, to give at least a minimal amount of protection to the people who are losing their constitutional right to have property uniformly and proportionately taxed. With or without this amendment, and if we assume that LR 186 is advanced and placed before the voters at a special election, this is not a done deal by any means. I have had constituents voicing a great deal of concern over elimination, virtual elimination of the uniformity clause as it relates to personal property. And I think, without some protection, that's going to be awfully hard to sell to the voters out there. And I don't know that it can get done. And I certainly am one that could not vote to do that. I know there have been...there have been some questions about whether the way this was handled had a flair for the dramatics or anything like that and that certainly just was not the intention. The intention was to get some time to get a little bit of reaction, to get some time to allow those who may support it to lobby it a little bit. I am asking at this time...and I can tell you my feelings on LR 186, I simply cannot