

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I'd rise to oppose the amendment. There is a lot of cross currents on this issue obviously as there was with 829 as we dealt with it earlier today except the facts are that the personal property tax issue without both 186 and 829, they are not separate issues, they are intertwined, they cannot be separated. In fact, they address different issues. We spent a century of...over a century in this state trying to handle the valuation for personal property. If you go back and look at the history, it's changed a lot of ways. The 30 vote thing is not that much concern with me. I've asked to go back and check and see how many votes have been cast for the changes that has occurred in this section, the section of law that this constitutional amendment affects. Since 1943 we could only find two bills that have received less than a three-fifths vote. One of those was in '65 and I do not recall, it was something to do with the exemption of household goods, but you understand that was before we went to the sales-income tax. The other time was in 1984 and apparently that was a piece of legislation that dealt with organizations that served liquor, so that really wasn't an exemption issue that needed 30 votes. So on the face of 30 votes, for personal property tax exemptions is not particularly significant I don't think. What I don't like is singling out one kind of revenue measure. Now I've got an amendment following which a lot of people maybe wouldn't like, but if you want to give the public greater protection that we do not enact any kind of revenue measures without a super majority of 30 votes, and you still have a Governor, you'd have to repeat the 30 votes. That, in fact, will give protection. Now my amendment goes further than that that follows this. It also requires 30 votes on appropriations which really only would apply to A bills. But if you want to protect the public's pocketbook, you need that control on the appropriations side and you need that control on the revenue side. You cannot separate them. You simply cannot separate them. I'm of the opinion that you have a much stronger constitutional amendment if we adopt the following amendment that I have up there. Now, true the way it is written, because it's a different section of the statute, as I go into the section of the Constitution that deals with the Legislature and the number of votes they have to cast, it would be a separate item. I rather suspect no matter what happens to the personal property tax issue, this one would be enacted. I think the public would feel much more comfortable if all revenue measures, whether they were General Fund, Cash Funds, fees,