

Elmer, people are saying, well, we have a crisis before us, so now is not the time. The crisis goes away and they will say, well gee, Senator Elmer, we don't need to change our tax structure now, we don't have a crisis. And I don't know how you deal with that chicken and egg concept. It's just that I think in...in deciding what it is we need to do to deal with the immediate problem before us, it forecloses options like this, but I hope by foreclosing options like this today doesn't mean that more creative, more imaginative questions should not be considered by this Legislature as we go on. And I think the value of this amendment is one of raising that, and I think it is good we have had this discussion. After having said that, I will confess to you something you probably suspect, and that is I am not going to vote for your amendment, but I think it is good that we've had the discussion, and you brought it forward.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Crosby, followed by Senators Wehrbein, Moore and Lynch. Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Madam Chair and members. Well, I appreciate Senator Elmer bringing this tax...this particular amendment and allowing us to talk about it. I have had a few phone calls about the idea and the concept, and also, obviously, not the same people who have been talking about LB 1063 don't want to talk this morning, so I got my light on in time to say something. I really...there is two or three things that hop out at me. To begin with, the promise that real estate taxes for homeowners would go down. I have heard that promised before. Forgive me, Senator Elmer, so far it hasn't happened, so you will have to allow me to be a little bit skeptical. And I did read the part about the fact that they would prepare...all the boards, including school boards, would prepare their respective budgets under the lid constraints currently in place. That sounds good. All of these points sound really good, but I have a few concerns about, and I know this is called the transaction tax, and that is how it has been presented to me. Well, you have a lot of transactions, you include churches, and I assume that would be hospitals and nursing homes, and so on. For me, it is another half percent on the sales tax, and it could be raised at any time for reasons that a lot of good people could come up with. And the church, in particular, Catholics answer to...Catholic Church answer to any problem, money problem, normally, is to have a special collection. I can just see my pastor sending out another little envelope saying this is the special collection for the transaction tax. He is not about to