

Committee. Unlike a lot of industries that are taxed, unlike a lot of individuals that are taxed, and it's a very adversarial relationship, historically, at least since about 1985 the relationship between the alcoholic beverage industry and the Revenue Committee has been relatively good compared to many other industries. This is a...this is an industry that understands that they have a product that can have negative effects on people's health if it's abused. They understand the need for it to have an excise tax on it separate from a sales tax. And, historically, what has happened is that they have also realized the need to increase that tax, periodically, and what's happened is they have come in, the representatives from the beer industry, the representatives from the wine industry, the representatives from the distilled spirits industry, they have been able to sit down with the Revenue Committee. I would be misleading if I said that everything was always...was always peaches and cream as far as the discussions have gone, but there has been a lack of acrimony, for the most part. They have been able to sit down. They have been able to hammer out agreements as to the structure of increases. In fact, as I recall, in 1985, I think it was, there was an agreement reached between people who would like to increase taxes on the alcoholic beverage industry and between industry representatives and the members of the Revenue Committee that was actually a signed agreement that said here's, as far as the undersigned are concerned, here's what our tax structure is going to be for the next, I believe it was two or three years. And, to my mind, as far as my connection with the Revenue Committee has been, that agreement is unprecedented. It's something that we have not reached in writing with any other entity. And I think that demonstrates the willingness of the industry to pay their fair share in taxes and to periodically ante up a little more as far as the excise tax rate goes. And I think that if we would adopt Senator Lamb's amendment, that would be a departure from that relationship which has been, as I have said, historically, a pretty good one between the industry and the Revenue Committee and it would allow the industry to come in in future years. Maybe next year when we're...when we start to deal with the Medicaid crisis that we all know is coming, that is here, in fact, maybe next year that's a health related tax, arguably, the tax on alcoholic beverages, and that may be a tax we want to look at when we look at the Medicaid crisis. If we adopt an increase of the type that Senator Lamb is proposing here, I think that gives the industry license to say, hey, you came in last year and you gouged us. You gouged us when we didn't know