

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Abboud. Senator Horgan, you are next.

SENATOR HORGAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. I think we need to maybe take a deep breath here and look at where we are, and recognize what happened yesterday, and where we are today. LB 1257 is the solid waste disposal bill that talks about communities having solid waste disposal costs and their ability to collect some fees. Senator Chambers, then, brings an amendment that says only for a city of a metropolitan class relative to 1257, if they want to charge a fee for garbage collection or recycling or whatever, that class, the City of Omaha will have to charge...will have to go to a vote of the people. And this body, yesterday, adopted that. So the bill right now says if the City of Omaha is going to collect any fee, it has to go to a vote of the people. All right. So now what am I trying to do with LB 1008, and I think it is important to recognize, with LB 1008 what I am saying is, okay, fine, we have said that if a city of the metropolitan class is going to collect a garbage fee, they have got to go to a vote of the people. The City of Omaha's attorneys say, 1257 doesn't give us that authority in statute and we are not included in the statutes dealing with utilities and the billing. LB 1008 then moves into the bill and says, okay, fine, if we are going to make a city of the metropolitan class charge...go to a vote of the people to charge any fee, that is okay, fine, at this point; then we ought to put in the statutes the structure and the authorizing language to allow the city to do just that, and to allow the city to collect the fee through MUD. This argument that the city needs to go out and sell this to the people is ridiculous. Why would they go out and spend time trying to convince people that they ought to have a garbage collection fee when the city has no authority to do it? You would not go out and try and convince the citizens of your community that you need a garbage collection fee when, if they all agreed with you, if you had a vote of the people, you still couldn't do it because it is not in the statutes. All this does at this point is, is say, okay, fine, if the city of a metropolitan class has to have a vote of the people before it collects a fee, then let's put in statute the enabling legislation that lets a city of the metropolitan class do exactly what you said yesterday you wanted it to have the authority to do. For those senators who supported Senator Chambers' amendment yesterday that said, yes, indeed, before the City of Omaha goes out and collects any fee,