

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Horgan, would you respond, please?

SENATOR HORGAN: Yes.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Senator Horgan, if, one of the concerns I had on this bill was whether or not the city could, in implementing its garbage collection fee, could also provide for exemptions for low income residents? Do you have an opinion on that?

SENATOR HORGAN: I think, Senator Ashford, as the bill is now amended with LB 1008 into the bill, it allows the city the flexibility to do that because there is no specific language in the amendment that says how the fee should be structured and so that would really, at this point, would be left up to the city.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you. I want...the amendment that I had, members, was an amendment that would provide specific authority to the city to provide for low income and elderly exemptions from the garbage fee. I did not run that amendment because I agree with Senator Horgan that the city does have the discretion to do that. We might...might have to consider an amendment on Select File, if that becomes a problem, but I guess my second point would be that I have some difficulty in understanding why...though I understand some of Senator Chambers' arguments, I have some difficulty understanding why we, in allowing the city to develop a garbage collection fee, and giving that to the voters to decide on whether or not it ought to be implemented, and in doing that, provide the voters with the basis for that, for the recycling program, and develop a recycling program that makes sense to the voters, to me that only makes sense. We have had a great deal of confusion in our community in the last two or three years because of the recycling program primarily the cost related to recycling. I know there's been debate already on this issue, on the difficulty that a city or any municipality has in making money in a recycling program. The recycling simply has not developed to the point where it becomes a money-maker and, quite frankly, the city is losing money on its recycling program. And it's my understanding that they will even lose more money in the future if they continue to operate the recycling program as it now is implemented. It seems to me that we need to give the city the tools to go to the voters and go to the people with a plan that, hopefully, makes sense and part of that is promoting the marketing of recyclable materials. And though I understand Senator Chambers' concern about