

offer the committee amendments, I would like to introduce a guest of Senator Dierks, a former resident of Ewing who now lives here in Lincoln. Bill Koenig is under the north balcony. Bill, if you would stand up, we would be happy to welcome you. Senator Kristensen, are you going to handle the committee amendments?

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Senator Withem, I can handle the committee amendments. I don't see the Vice Chair or the Chair. I will begin that and if they make their way here, they can certainly take over.

SPEAKER WITHEM: If they object to this usurpation, they can make themselves known when they get here.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: I'm not sure I know what that word means but, yes. Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, the committee amendment that is before you, just as a brief review, amendment or LR 3 was one of the constitutional amendments that was to be on the fall ballot dealing with the Tax Equalization and Review Commission. As with the other amendments, this is the fifth one of the five that were taken off the ballot. The amendment is a...I don't think it's fair to characterize it as being the exact same thing that was put on the November ballot but it is close. The old amendment, which was originally introduced in the green copy, was the exact replica of what was on the ballot for November. The committee amendment still maintains that by January 1, 1997 there shall be a Tax Equalization Review Commission. That remains the same. It goes on to say that the members of the commission shall be appointed by the Governor, as provided by law. That is the same. As with the terms of their office and the compensation to be decided by law, that is the exact same. What is added through the committee amendment, and this is one that I did offer to the committee and was adopted was the tax commissioner shall be appointed by the Governor with the approval of the Legislature. In substance, that is the same as the original Constitution that is before us, that we've had, for years, this was one of the topics of discussion at the committee hearing. The other is the tax commissioner may have jurisdiction over the administration of the revenue laws of the state and such other duties and powers as provided by law, and the tax commissioner shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. If you look at the green sheet, that is substantially the same language that's existing in the Constitution before. What I have done and the major