

LR 48. Mr. Clerk, is there anything further on the bill?

ASSISTANT CLERK: Madam President, the next amendment I have is offered by Senator Bernard-Stevens. (The Bernard-Stevens amendment appears on pages 734-35 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Madam President and members of the body, this amendment would simply add a section. Since we're dealing with the problems of tobacco and we're dealing with the problems of firsthand, secondhand, thirdhand and whatever hand, smoke and the damages that can be...that it can have, we're dancing around the issue a great deal and if we pass the bill in its form now, it's got enough holes that I think Swiss cheese might be a better word for it. But there might be a way that we can actually put some substance into the bill where the body can pass the bill and actually feel good about what it does. So this amendment simply changes...adds one word to a new section and it would simply make it right now that if you're a minor, you can purchase tobacco, you can use tobacco but it's not against the law to possess. And so this just adds the word "possess" there so that minors, if we truly are serious about them not...we don't want them to smoke, we want them to understand that it's wrong to smoke, we want them to understand that it's dangerous not only health hazardwise but even addictive to smoke, that we also do not want minors to possess tobacco products and that's what the amendment does. It adds the word "possess" so that it also would be illegal for minors to be able to do in regards to tobacco. So that's the nature of the amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Schimek, to speak to the Senator Bernard-Stevens amendment. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam President and members of the Legislature, I will always stand on this floor, unless some situation can arise which I can't contemplate right now, and oppose those efforts to criminalize our children. I know the tobacco industry wants this amendment, store operators who sell tobacco to minors want this amendment, but because our children often are victimized by what we as adults do, the activities and conduct in which we engage, they are merely chips off the old blockheads, and I will not support any bill, any amendment which