

PRESIDENT ROBAK: The Chair recognizes Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam President and members of the Legislature, a copy of this amendment had been passed around and it should be on your desks now if you haven't cleared it completely. But in case you don't have a copy of it, it will be very easy for me to let you know what it is. And if you turn to page 12, in line 13, you will find the words...well, let me start with line 11 and read through line 13. With the amendment that we adopted this morning, it would read, "The board may approve the area application if the proposed designated blighted and substandard area fits within the definition of such an area under the act." Strike period and add "and if such area application is in the public interest." I will tell you what the purpose of this amendment is. Not all decisions that this board will take will necessarily be in the public interest. There are pressures that can be brought on a governor, on a treasurer, maybe not to the same extent, but possibly on the person who does the...the state investment officer. I was discussing with one of my colleagues earlier today that many, many years ago, Senator Dierks, when you...well, you may not even have been a little fellow by then, you may not have even been thought of, but there was a governor in office and at that time the governor had sole authority to grant pardons, respites and all these other things that the pardoning power has and he was selling these things to people. And there have been very recent reports of scandals in other states where governors have sold pardons and mitigations of sentences. So if enough money is involved, if enough pressure is brought to bear, governors, being human, and having feet of clay, as all human beings have, could be prevailed upon to agree to have one of these areas declared blighted and substandard and drag the treasurer and the state investment officer along. The two types of declarations, or the two types of applications available under this bill is the first one that results in the declaration of an area as being substandard and blighted. That's the one that I'm talking about, that's the large box. Then a smaller box is placed in that one and that smaller box is the project area application. Although the project area could comprise the entire substandard and blighted area it may not. What I'm dealing with now is the application to have an area declared substandard and blighted. That is done by the three-person board comprised of state officials. The project application will be approved or disapproved by the agency, whether it's a city, a collection of