

turn a semi around. Douglas County is a cumbersome, large county with a lot of inequality right now, I will freely admit that, and I've heard from people from all over. We are trying to get in line with the law and trying to get these valuations changed but it will take us some time to do so. That's something that Douglas County will have to deal with the best that it can. But what I'm asking on this amendment is somewhat different from the considerations that are given in the Douglas County letter and from the Douglas County lobbyists and the Douglas County Board. My question is on constitutionality of whether we can do this, whether we can set a range and force the Board of Equalization into a range or whether we need to change the Constitution first to say that we can set a range and then go about setting the range. So it is...it is an important question. I wanted to make sure it was raised before there was a vote taken on LB 137. I would ask you to consider this and if you find, as I have, that it makes great sense to do so, and I would allow that we will have an Attorney General's Opinion within a week or so on this question, then I would ask that you adopt this motion to return it to Select File for this amendment that you have in front of you. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM PRESIDING

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Witek. The speaking order will be Senators Abboud, Hall, Pirsch and Warner. Senator Hall.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, I rise in opposition to the specific amendment that Senator Witek brings to us, but I also rise in empathy with her position. I filed a motion to return LB 137 to Select File for purposes of striking the emergency clause. We did debate this issue on General File. I remember that Senator Warner and I talked and I believe there were a few others that talked about this issue. It is one that, because of currently what is taking place in Douglas County but what is also taking place in other counties, this is not an issue that is limited, by any stretch, to Douglas County. All you have to do is read the bill and look at how the proposed changes raise the requirements for purposes of an acceptable range in terms of assessment or valuation, rather, which is the equivalent of assessment, with regard to not only agricultural land but residential property as well. The reason that I would like to see the emergency clause stripped from the bill, as it was put on as a committee amendment, is that it would buy at least a year's time for folks to adjust to the changes that have