

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Wickersham.

CLERK: Senator Wickersham does have an amendment to the committee amendments, Madam President, AM943, found on page 1632 of the Journal.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Wickersham.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Okay. Thank you, Madam President. I do not wish to hold up the bill and I mean that sincerely this time. So the amendment simply strikes Sections 1 and 2 of the committee amendments. Primarily, it is directed at a provision which would allow a municipality to declare that no other...once you had one franchise in the municipality, that they could deny or limit the request of another utility to erect and deliver in that community. Arguably, the provision in the committee amendments is contrary to federal law. In April of 1992, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission issued an order, 636, deregulating, in effect, the natural gas industry. The committee amendment, as is presented to you, would, in fact, seemingly give an opportunity to reregulate in some respects. So that issue is raised. There are other issues of competition, etcetera. I do not know exactly how those might ultimately be resolved but I believe the parties who are interested are working at resolving those issues, but it's, in my mind, it's not appropriate to have that provision adopted at this time. I might note that if Senator Hillman was here, I believe she would be carrying this amendment. She had...has a considerable interest in this subject matter. I know that we all hope that she can be back in the body soon. But, if she were here, I believe she would be carrying this amendment. I think Senator Matzke also wishes to comment on the amendment to the committee amendments. And, Senator Matzke, if you would like a few moments to do that, I will give (microphone inactivated).

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Is there any discussion of the Wickersham amendment? Senator Hartnett, do you wish to discuss...Senator Hartnett, do you wish to discuss the Wickersham amendment?

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: (Microphone not activated)...time to Senator Matzke.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Excuse me, Senator Matzke, I'm sorry.