

gone out of business, they have. That means that there's been fewer papers that have to pick up more of the legal notices. That means they have in effect gotten more of the market share if you will in this area. I don't know if it's enough to keep them afloat. We've had papers that have shut down in the larger cities, some that have consolidated. The issue, I guess, is one of, where do we go with the dollar figures that are in this proposal? I think the Avery amendment is one that's fair and...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR HALL: ...it takes away much of the argument from the bill in terms of the additional increases over a number of years because if the argument is that the cost is there, then build it in up front, although I do think that at a minimum what it does is it saves the communities, gives them some time to budget but what the Avery amendment does is it says, here's where the standard is going to be, if you want a higher rate go back to the Legislature on an annual basis. We see those types of bills introduced each and every year. With that again I rise in support of Senator Avery's amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER WITHEM: On the Avery amendment, Senator Vrtiska, it's my understanding you wanted to wait and address the bill itself, your light is on up here? Okay, we'll leave that light on. That was the understanding I think you had with the Lieutenant Governor here and that's fine. Senator Maurstad.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, just a couple of very brief points after Senator Hall. I want to make comments, I want to make sure everybody understands and remind them again that this does not in any way affect the World-Herald or anything up in that area. I appreciate Senator Hall using the handout that I distributed relative to the importance of local papers to small towns and also appreciate his recognition of why they're important so I won't go into that any further and also to answer a question that Senator Chambers presented. It's been brought to my attention that the legal rates, both what are currently in effect and what are proposed, are customarily lower, are customarily lower than the commercial rates being charged by the same paper. And finally Senator Avery talked about delaying any increase beyond what would be left in the bill if his amendment were passed and in effect if his amendment is adopted it eliminates any increase and there certainly would be no guarantee that the body would want to address this issue