

performing have been taken away or usurped by deregulation and things that have happened on the federal level. There is a \$2.3 million budget involved here, which if there would be any way to save any part of that it would be truly in our best interest to do that over a long-term basis. I think the flexibility that the proponents feel they could have by directing this agency rather than having it be a constitutional agency, I think there's merit to that. We certainly have been willing to take on all kinds of other problem areas, and in fact in the Legislature we've, at times, jealously guarded having the responsibility to regulate and take care of major problems. Can we make the PSC more responsive? Can we make them more attuned to the world we live in now? That would be our challenge, and we would have to be up to that challenge. The opponents, on the other hand, are arguing that the PSC is the only...being in the constitution somehow is the only way that the little guy can get representation, that we in the Legislature won't look out for the little guy, I guess. The opponents to this resolution feel that the PSC can make adjustments to become more effective and more efficient, and I guess that remains to be seen. The opponents feel that the Legislature will not empower a legislative controlled agency to do the things that we need to do. Now the one thing that I've heard in the short time that I've heard the discussion on this that makes...that is a deciding factor for me at this point is that the Legislature has seen fit to do a program evaluation study of this entire area and this agency, this commission. And that study is due out very, very soon. The other fact that influences me greatly is that if we fail to advance 41CA it goes to the bottom of the list of Speaker priority...of senator priority bills. If it goes to the bottom of the list of senator priority bills on General File, I think effectively the opponents have killed the bill. I think it is only fair, and I'd ask the body to consider keeping 41CA alive, pass it to Select File. We get the program evaluation report so that we can assemble that into the information that's been given to us, I've found those reports to be extremely, extremely helpful and in-depth. In the leaky underground storage tank area that we just introduced legislation on I found their report to be extremely beneficial in providing information, and strengths and weaknesses in the program will hopefully come out in that report. I think this body should be willing to keep this bill alive until we have that information. I think that's a valid argument. I think the proponents of 41CA have some good points. I think the opponents