

deciding whether there should be legislation to allow them to do that or not to do that. I don't think it is harmful to society generally to allow them to probe into these corporations as long as they don't abuse the power, and there has been no evidence that they've ever abused the power, and see what's going on there in terms of how they are dealing with the consumers and with the public. So no abuse of that power, and it is a good power to have, I'd just as soon leave that there. The second thing this bill would do if it passes is to take away the authority of the Public Service Commission to approve consolidations. Well, I don't think you and I...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...as the Legislature, are much equipped to deal with consolidations and the detailed kinds of figuring and the detailed kinds of investigation that has to be done to figure out whether these consolidations are good or bad for the public. But the situations can occur, and will occur again in the future, if not in the short term, at least in the long term, where there will be consolidations and the question will be raised as to whether it is for the public benefit or monopolistic in nature. Already we run into some of those kinds of things both in the telecommunications area. I don't think there is anything wrong with having an extra body sitting out there looking at that question and, again, what evidence has...is there of the abuse of this extra legislative power? What evidence of abuse is there? I don't think that there has been any presentation of any abuse with respect to this authority. The third thing it would do would be...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Time

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...to let the public service...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Was that the end of my time?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: It is, Senator.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Stuhr.