

as they please.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Why would they have to have a meeting if a determination is made that there would not be any property tax savings or if they decided they would not want to consolidate?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, I think there could be a number of good effects of a public hearing. First of all, just as a matter of public concern, I think there's a lot of public concern out there about trying to make government efficient and trying to reduce property taxes and if the result of their analysis is that there are no savings then I think it does the public good to have their county board appear before them and say, here's the examination that we've done, it's been thorough and there's simply no savings to be had any way in our situation.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay, now, Senator Beutler, let's say that we have three counties stacked atop each other, one, two, and three. One and two see some economic advantage to merging or consolidating and three would be left out in the cold but three wants to be a part of it. One and two could choose to keep three out of the consolidation, is that correct?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator, that's correct under current law, correct under 1085 and correct under...as 1085 would be amended by this amendment.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: So this is not necessarily designed to equalize or make equitable the distribution of wealth within the state. What it's designed to do is let counties do what is in their best economic interests, even if it's to the detriment of other counties who would like to get in but can't because they're either sparsely populated or don't have a good tax base. Is that true?

SENATOR BEUTLER: I think there's a measure of accuracy to that, Senator. They can only be overcome by state controls that we have so far found undesirable.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Do you think from the way we have observed counties operate and I've seen a great amount of inefficiency, duplication and unwillingness to face up to issues, that this is something we should put into the hands of the counties and maybe create a worse problem than the kind we have now because of the