

CLERK: Senator, you had given me this one a little earlier this morning, so that's why you may look....

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Will, members of the committee, as soon as the Page gets here this will be passed out to you. I was confused as to the sequence of the amendments or I would have had this passed out earlier, but let me tell you what the amendment does and, in doing that, give you a little background. You may recall that it was not just the Revenue Committee that worked on the property tax proposals, although it was the Revenue Committee that essentially did almost all the work and brought it all together, but there was participation by all the other committees and I think we were all grateful for that opportunity to participate. And you may recall that we were asked to participate on three different items really, looking at property tax levying, looking at substitute revenues was another area, and then the third area we were asked to look at is how...what could we do within our jurisdictions to encourage restructuring and examination of more efficient forms, that kind of thing, all a part of the broader examination. In the Natural Resources Committee, on the item of restructuring and looking at the structure of things, the main property tax levying entity we had was the NRDs and so we looked at them and asked ourselves what could we do to hopefully get a better perspective on how we might make things more efficient there, even though that's not one of the large...largest taxing kinds of districts, and the NRDs themselves have been very helpful in trying to help us approach this problem. They, I think, made a...are making a good faith effort to look at efficiencies. It's a very difficult situation for them because they are in the position of protecting ground water quality and managing natural resources and that's a job that's taken on a larger responsibility, especially in terms of the environmental demands of the federal government and society generally. But, nonetheless, what they suggested and what we put into a committee bill and advanced, I think without dissenting vote, was the suggestion that we ask the Natural Resources Commission to undertake a study and the Natural Resources Commission, you will recall from some of our earlier debates, is essentially a state policy-making group, but it's compromised, for all practical purposes, primarily of representatives from the various NRDs and so they are the godfather of NRDs at the state level. They have undertaken in the past, over time, a whole series of studies relating to