

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. Senator Chambers, I know every once in a while you'll tell the body that we may not listen, but you listen to what we say, and I appreciate that, 'cause then I always know that no matter what I'm talking on, there's some person out there listening. But on the other hand, I also listen to what you said. And though we are in agreement on support for the amendment, I remember the first time you got up you said that you'll raise a stronger point about this section, maybe stronger than what Senator Bernard-Stevens did in the beginning, and at the end you kind of turned that around and said it's something to do with nothing for the most part, and you chastised a little bit because some of us are taking it more serious. And I did enjoy that portion of it, but nonetheless, you were right on the mark as far as the amendment is concerned. You know one of the things that we're going to have to talk about, and we will eventually on this bill and other bills, is if you have a county that's going to be...is relatively well off, in other words they're not close to the 45 percent cap that they'll be on, maybe they're at 39 percent, or 39 cents, maybe they're at 38 cents, or 32 cents, or whatever. Why would a county that's going to be...is relatively well off, why would they even want to have a county that's really struggling, that doesn't have a lot of land value, doesn't have a lot of people, why would they even want to bring them in so that the majority of the large county taxpayers will basically take over a majority portion of that funding? And maybe someone will be able to explain that to me, but I don't know why a county would want to do that. I could see where counties of mutual interests, mutual levies, they have a lot of things they could share and they're not going to be hurt taxwise or what have you, it might be in their best interest, but in many cases it's poor trying to get into a more wealthy one, or that has more room. And I don't...I agree with Senator Chambers at some point, I don't imagine...I can't imagine why the one county would want to take on those burdens, even if they do get to collect, you know, the paltry amount of value that's on that particular portion of the smaller county. But back to this particular amendment. This particular amendment simply says that the area that we put in there says they have to negotiate in good faith. And the part I really found intriguing is really the last part that I strike, on line 14 at the end, if, after good faith attempts to develop an agreement, the county board is unable to perfect an agreement within six months after the filing date of the petition, the