

Mr. President, the next amendment I have to LB 1368 is by Senator Wickersham. (Wickersham amendment, AM3582, may be found on page 1147 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Wickersham, you're recognized to open on your amendment.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Thank you, Mr. President. This amendment falls into the category of quite technical but important I don't know what else you'd expect from me. The thrust of this amendment is that we should not have two different systems for using the 829 credits. And I will confess to being considerably indebted to Senator Brashear for passing out a purple piece of paper with the description of the dual systems that we would have in place if 1368 is passed without my amendment. What we would have in place is the original 829, and then we would have a new system that is being developed expressly for the Union Pacific Railroad. I'm a cosponsor of 1368, which may surprise some of you who remember that I argued strenuously last year that 829 itself represented bad policy for the state of Nebraska, that we should not adopt it, nor should we have adopted the companion bills that were also introduced and passed with 829. But all of that is history, at least as far as I am concerned. The rest of you made a decision, I still have tremendous misgivings about that decision, but it has been made. And today we're here to deal with the results of the decision that we made about a year ago. At the time 829 was passed one of the flaws that I thought it contained and that I still think it contains was the provision allowing the company that qualified simply to retain, to retain the income tax withheld from an employees paycheck. Those dollars were never transmitted to the Department of Revenue, they are simply to be held in the corporate bank account until they are used for one of the purposes permitted by 829. That process does a couple of things which I think are inappropriate. One, I think in some measure it reduces accountability. They just hold our money, those are really our state dollars. They hold our state dollars until they decide to use them. I don't know of any other state government program that we operate on that basis. Secondly, you never can tell what's going to happen when somebody else has your money. How many of you turn over to some other party your bank account and say spend it as I direct you to spend it? Now occasionally we do that, but not very many of you do that and you don't do it very often. It's true that we do that