

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I'd rise to support Senator Withem's motion for reconsideration. I've generally talked, I think most of us have talked, at least out of the Revenue Committee and others who have been working close, that there was five bills, they were a package in a sense, that they all needed to go. But, frankly, LR 292CA is the mainstay because if, in fact, you're going to be able to reduce the cost of government, and we talk a lot about property tax, people forget the underlying theme of everything that's being done is to try to find ways of restructuring of state and local government to reduce the costs of the operation of government through more efficient methods of organizing more efficient operations, and 292 constitutional amendment is exceedingly important in the long run if that's going to happen. Because, unless you have far better authorization than we currently is permitted under the constitution for some of these cooperative efforts to be done and unless you retain the procedure that's in 292 that deals with the ability to provide a different tax base on...by a class of property for some of those shared services so, in fact, agreements can be arrived at in an equitable fashion, and unless you enact those things then much of what is envisioned simply is not going to be feasible to happen under the constitution. I, too, would like to have voted yes for personal reasons, but I know as a matter of public policy it was the wrong thing to do and I believe very firmly that if this remains on this bill it will never see 30 votes. I suspect some of you who voted yes would have...hesitant to beat the 30 votes to put it on the ballot. And should that happen then much of what is envisioned just simply is not going to be feasible to happen until the next constitution amendment comes along in another year or, very frankly, I suspect that we'll find more people donating to some of the petitions that I read about in the papers over Sunday to help get some of those things going. And that's not going to help most of you who have a concern about property taxes, certainly is not going to help those of you who believe that government's not going to be able to function. So I'd strongly urge that you support the motion by Senator Withem to reconsider the adoption of this amendment. The record's been made of your concern and your interest, but with a sense of being able to establish a long-term policy that this constitutional amendment depends on, I think the amendment that was just adopted needs to be removed.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Senator Warner. Senator Wesely.