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LB 1285

brought by the county attorney. The PSC is not a criminal agency in the sense of punishing crimes. We're not talking about anything...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...other than civil violations. So, if we're talking about civil violations, we cannot talk about criminal punishment. Everything in this area we know and it is a given is civil in nature. And we have given various agencies the power to assess civil or administrative fines or penalties, whichever term you please. That already is embedded in the law. We, as a Legislature, are imprisoned in that policy. This is just a matter of saying we want to make use of that authority to ensure that orders and the law are complied with, which compliance is necessary to see that the citizens get from these companies what they pay for. What could be more reasonable than that?

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Chambers. For discussion on the first part of the divided question to LB 1285... (Visitors introduced.) Further debate on LB 1285, Senator Quandahl, followed by Senator Landis, Lynch, and Janssen.

SENATOR QUANDAHL: Yes, thank you, Mr. President. I have to admit I was somewhat oblivious to this entire discussion till about Monday of this week when I did start getting...getting educated on the subject, and I have a question for Senator Bromm, if he would respond.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Bromm, would you yield?

SENATOR BROMM: Yes. Yes, I would, Senator Quandahl.

SENATOR QUANDAHL: And if I could, I just...my question is, is that behind this I understand that US West does not like LB 1285 at all or any of the amendments and I do understand that, and I do also understand that from the hearing there wasn't any strenuous objections to the basic concept behind the bill. But what I haven't heard is some history behind what the compelling reason for actually granting this fining authority. Is there