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LB 171

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: No, that isn't right, though.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...Senator Wickersham, the second question I wanted to ask was with regard to we're allowing an exemption here to the sales tax. Did the federal gov...is the federal government, who came down with this mandate, are they allowing any exemptions of any kind of taxation on these particular entities because they caused this problem, if it's a problem?

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Not that...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Would you respond, Senator?

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Not that I'm aware of. In fact, my suggestion was that the federal government should use some of the proceeds from the...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: ...sale of the spectrum that the broadcasters are turning over to them to pay for the new equipment, but that fell on deaf ears.

SENATOR BEUTLER: I don't...I don't quite understand. If the federal government, who made this rule, didn't think it was a hardship on them, all things considered, why should we?

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Well, there's more to the story.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay. Please elaborate.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Well, I think if you follow the history of this issue carefully and watch the development of digital television as a technology, I would say that the broadcast industry had a problem on its hands. The digital television sets that were necessary to receive and use a digital signal at the time they were initially developed would have cost between four and five thousand dollars each. It was difficult to assume that individuals would be willing to pay four to five thousand dollars for a new television set. So there was new technology but no real way to get the technology implemented.