

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

April 4, 2000

LB 1021

that that was the law, is the law and the intent is fairly technical. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Those wishing to speak to the amendment are Senator Wickersham, Schimek and Chambers. Senator Wickersham. Senator Wickersham, did you wish to speak to the amendment? Followed by Senator Schimek and Senator Chambers.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Well, Mr. President, the interpretation of the existing language that Senator Beutler suggests is a surprise to me. And Senator Beutler is correct, because there are criminal penalties, we ought to know what we're doing. And Senator Beutler is also correct that the Accountability and Disclosure Commission has interpreted the language in the fashion that he's suggesting to you. But that creates very large problems. And, quite frankly, I was unaware that they were interpreting the language in that fashion. That...and in fact the committee amendments, that were in effect defeated because they've been replaced by an amendment offered earlier, had various provisions for aggregating gifts to a specified amount. In discussions that I had with other persons, we had generally reached an agreement that that was an impractical and impossible standard to measure. For example, the recipient of a gift might not have any idea of its value, and while it looks innocuous that you may have received something, for example the cheese cake that was down at...or the carrot cake, I guess it is, there was a carrot cake on my desk when I went downstairs. They said it was from the Optometric Association. I have no idea what that carrot cake is worth. And if I...if they...if they...if something else appeared on my desk and I didn't know what the value of that was and it was also from the Optometric Association, what would I do? I'm fairly well convinced that the single piece of carrot cake that I have on my desk is not worth \$50, but is a carrot cake together with let's say the annual subscription to their trade magazine that they send me, is that worth 50 bucks? It's an impossible standard. It would require us literally to have scribes running around behind us, noting everything that we receive, guessing at its value, and then at the end of each month adding it up to determine whether or not we had a problem. And again remember, if you don't do that, if you don't do that, or if you're wrong when you do that,