

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

April 10, 2000 LB 1021

\$4.19, less than a hamburger at Lazio's, it should be a crime and punishable. And Senator Beutler asks, should there be crimes for bankers that do wrongdoing? Absolutely. And what should happen is there should be injured parties and the injured party in political...in the political realm is when somebody's representation is sold for any amount of money. That social harm should be punished severely, without regard to an amount of money, because that is a significant social harm. But to get a convoluted series of numbers, the aggregate of which if you get above what are...what you're told is an acceptable amount six months of a year but the seventh month all of a sudden is a crime, is a bad idea. Criminalize genuinely criminal behavior, which is where you sell votes or influence for money. Beyond that, disclose. And, by the way, this current year we have a 62 percent approval rating in the Legislature. It's the highest on record for a rather good deal of time. Why? You think it has to do with our accountability and disclosure reports; public streamed through old floor 13, went through our forms and said, my goodness, clean as a whistle, thank goodness? No. You know why our approval rating rises and falls? It depends on things like what's the property tax level people are paying. I mean it's not whether or not we're accepting a gift from a lobbyist that you cannot show has any tit for tat exchange. That's not it. People have confidence or lack of confidence in us by whether or not we keep our word or our campaign promises; whether we say we're going to do something about property tax relief but we really don't; whether we say we're fighting to be tough on being...and frugal on money or whether the budget grows 7 or 8 percent. This is the place people say you are legitimate or you are illegitimate, and we're chasing our tail when we invent hurdles for which we can only trip over, even though there's no showing of a social wrong, and yet criminalize our behavior.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR LANDIS: I applaud Senator Smith's decision to attempt to reconsider. It's my guess it probably won't be successful because we're just used to putting standards like this on ourselves. We're just, you know, we do this all the time. I wouldn't do it. I would trust disclosure. I would trust the discomfort of having to answer, why did you vote on "X" bill