

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

May 3, 2005

LB 542

recommendations regarding our tax code which will enhance economic development sufficient to meet the needs, jobs, goods, and services of our citizens. We currently have a collection of knowledge and experience which needs to contribute to each...to such an important project as to how funds for government services are collected. My plan will allow the bill...or, allow the commission 18 months to meet and make recommendations to the Legislature for consideration in January '07, when 40 percent of our body will be freshman senators. Now, my idea was not brought out because of a fiscal crisis, but a general dissatisfaction with the workings of our state tax system. The issues of property taxes, sales and income tax bases, rates, and percentages are best addressed free from the day-to-day pressures of government operations. Long-term reform can best be accomplished with well-designed tax study. It is possible that reforms enacted subsequent to this study will again succumb to political maneuvering. And that disconnect between short-term political expediency and long-term fiscal policy is unfortunate. Legislation resulting from this commission's recommendations would be a guide for future legislators as they consider tax policy. We cannot bind future Legislatures, but we can recommend a basic tax code that is more geared to the twenty-first century than we have now. A tax study at this time is still a valuable tool to bring us back to the basics and provide us with a road map...

SENATOR SCHIMEK: One minute.

SENATOR BURLING: ...to help us get to where we need to go. I will conclude my opening there. And the Revenue Committee, who has been very cooperative with me on this issue, has an amendment to my bill. In fact, it becomes the bill. And so I'll go ahead and let that amendment be introduced. And then we'll continue our discussion. Thank you, Madam President.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Burling. Mr. Clerk, are there amendments?

CLERK: There are Revenue Committee amendments, Madam President.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Senator Connealy, would you like to open on