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LB 312, 425

our legislative process is being abused. The other day we had LB 312 on the floor. It's a tax incentive bill for business. I'd venture to say that between 40 to 45 members of this body support that bill. That bill is going to sail right through. Oh, I know there might be some stalling tactics, but in the end the bill is going to sail through. It has tremendous support. Senator Chambers filed 15 or so amendments to the bill, and Senator Landis made a deal with him on open microphone; said, Senator Chambers, if you pull your 15 amendments then I will take one of my bills, which is a committee priority bill, and I'll gut that bill and allow you to use it for a bill that you can't get out of committee. I think that does great violence to our committee process. It takes a bill that's a committee priority bill of Business and Labor Committee, and Senator Landis says you can gut that one, and he says to Senator Chambers, you can take a bill that's pending in Judiciary Committee that you can't get out of committee because you don't have the votes and you can insert it into this other bill. I think that's a great abuse of the process, I think that's wrong, and it certainly wasn't necessary to move LB 312. LB 312 was going to move. It's got 40 or more votes of support. Today we have before us again, I think it's identical language, the same amendment we talked about the other day, and that amendment was not attached. Senator Chambers is offering it again. I think it's wrong. This is the state budget. This is a bill that funds the operations of state government. If we want to start using this bill to advance social policy, then it's fair game. It's fair game. You're opening the doors to all kinds of amendments if that's where you want to go. The courts have spoken to the question of protected class status. It's a technical legal issue. We've discussed that in the Judiciary Committee any number of times. And one of the criteria for protected class status is that the group would be considered politically powerless. That's certainly not the case here. That is certainly not the case. I think we're heading down the wrong path. We should not adopt this amendment. I'd urge you to vote no on AM1379. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Foley. Senator Jensen, followed by Senator Chambers.