

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

January 25, 2006 LB 32

something of value. You are compensated for that. Expenses, on the other hand, are different. That word describes out-of-pocket expenditures or obligations assumed by you in doing one thing or another. Expenses are reimbursed. When expenses are reimbursed, the one receiving the reimbursement is not receiving compensation. The reimbursement is not pay for work done, it is not wages for work done, it is not salary. It is to give back to you that which you are out of pocket for. So when this language was put into the statute, people didn't know the difference between compensation and reimbursement because they didn't know there were two words. Anything you got from the state under any circumstances had to be compensation, because that's what they had heard. So they don't look up words even in the dictionary. You could stretch a point and say, because money is being turned over to an individual by the state, I want to call it compensation. Maybe you want to. And maybe if you came along at a less critical time and I was not here, they will put into the law the word "compensation" where it ought to be "reimbursement." But when we are enacting a law, we should try to be as accurate and precise as we can. Obviously, under this bunglesome language, these individuals have been reimbursed for their expenses, but who even takes the time to read the language in the existing law? Senator Schrock is very much on the case when it comes to water and related natural resource issues. This goes into an area where I have a bit of knowledge and interest. This makes me think of a movie I saw a long time ago, and these guys were in a submarine. I don't remember which of the persons that I'll mention was the actor in charge, because they all look alike to me: Burt Lancaster, Victor Mature, Kirk Douglas. They all look alike to me. I don't know one from the other, unless he's wearing a label or he's the only one in the movie and his name is up there. So it was one of those guys. And you heard this sonar sound in the submarine, you know, that little steady beat--"oo, oo, oo." And one of them said, what is that, sir? I can't make that out. I first heard that and saw it when I was a little bitty fellow and I don't remember what it was, but obviously it was something under the water because sonar lets you know that something is there and your sound waves are striking it. But they never made it out and to this day I don't know what it was. But when I looked at this piece of legislation and the language