

there were three or four issues that needed to be addressed. Overriding all of the issues was the issue of public accountability, the public's right to know that state government is being audited, that the Legislature is being audited as are other agencies of state government and on an equitable basis. But the issues that needed to be addressed were the issues of confidentiality, the legal issues that were raised, have been raised by the Attorney General, by the Exec Board, by other members of the Legislature, and the rules that should be established in order to make the audit a fair audit and in order to guarantee accountability. And in those discussions, what was interesting to me as those discussions evolved is that the State Auditor, at least in his discussions with me, realized a couple of things. He realized, one, that when his request for the audit was made initially in October that many of these concerns had not been addressed by him and that they needed to be addressed. The issue of confidentiality was discussed a little bit between the Auditor and myself during the audit of our office but I think in our further discussions he realized that confidentiality was a significant issue and needed to be addressed in legislative form. He also acknowledged to me on numerous occasions that there were no rules particularly in doing the audit, that for whatever reason, that there just were not established rules and regulations for doing this particular audit, that the Legislature had established rules for the...had established rules for the expense audit, had established other rules and regulations for the conducting of business, but on this...in this particular area that the phone audits had been done in a particular way for a number of years and that that had not changed and that the Auditor realized in his discussions with me that, yes, that we needed those rules then to have a fair and equitable audit done to ensure accountability but, at the same time, to ensure that it be done fairly, that rules needed to be established. So those discussions went on over a three or four month time span and then right before the...right at the time that the session started, Senator Landis and I went in to speak with the Auditor and discussed a compromise or a bill that would address these concerns of rule making, confidentiality, the legal concerns that have been raised and what we came up with was LB 427. Subsequent to that time, the Exec Board met and they established rules and regulations which, for the most part, were identical to LB 427 but had some additional requirements in there...in them. And one of the differences in the bill that is out here now, LB 579, ...Madam President, may I please have a gavel again. (Gavel.) One of