

amendment. All those in favor vote aye, opposed vote no. Have you all voted on the Wickersham amendment? Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the adoption of the amendment.

SPEAKER BAACK: The amendment is adopted.

CLERK: Nothing further on the bill, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BAACK: Discussion on the bill, Senator Vrtiska.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I think what this bill is attempting to do is legalize or make legal something that's been going on for a long time. Most of these departments have had all kinds of drives to raise money that they can use to purchase equipment because in many of the small districts there is a problem with the tax base. My own particular district, we've raised over \$50,000 in the last 25 years to purchase equipment, and obviously some of the money is spent for other than purchase of equipment, but it is sure a heck of a lot of work that the firemen have gone through to raise this money, and it has always been the assumption, and I am sure that it is true with many of the fire departments around the country that this is money that they raised outside of the budget process, and, therefore, they could handle the money and do as they pleased with it. And being involved in the fire service these many years, I've talked to a lot of fire departments and a lot of chiefs around the state and many of them do the same thing we do. They go out and have various types of fund-raisers, and they do it with good intentions and, obviously, when they have these fund-raisers, sometimes they have a party that goes along with it, and maybe some of the money is spent for things that a budget would not be proper to spend money for. But because they raise this themselves, they feel like that certainly they have a right to have money. The other interesting thing about it is in our particular case, and I'm sure this is true in a lot of fire departments, the rural and city forces or village forces have joined together as either one department or part of them as associate members and they work together, and it becomes an issue then who does the money really belong to. As I said earlier, we raised a considerable amount of money and we bought a fire truck over the years with the money that we accumulated through community consignment sales where we took the profits from the proceeds of the sale or