

May 17, 1993

LB 98

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I'm looking for the one that...that substitutes the word ten for fifty.

CLERK: That's not this one, that's the next one.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Oh. What does this one say?

CLERK: Section five, strike fifty, insert five.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Oh, I want to withdraw that one.

CLERK: Okay.

SPEAKER BAACK: It is withdrawn.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Chambers would move to amend with an amendment found on page 2135 of the Journal.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, this is the one that I intend to take up. Senator Withem and I had been discussing the percentage of juice that would be in a drink before it would be taxed, or at what level of juice content one of these drinks would not be taxed. Ten percent is the figure arrived at. I'm opposed to sales taxes because of their regressive nature. But on this particular bill I'm going to hope that when the Governor vetoes it, if it gets to his desk, the veto will be withdrawn. But on the chance that may not happen, I'm trying to mitigate the damage as much as possible. During the debate the other day, I think Senator Withem had expressed some agreement with this idea, but I'll let him state for the record how he feels about the amendment now that it's being offered. But my rationale for offering it was that we should not tax those least able to pay for the drinks that they consume while not taxing those who are able to afford, and who do, in fact, purchase a higher cost drink. So this amendment would change the provision of the bill which says that a beverage must contain at least 50 percent fruit or vegetable juice, before being exempt from the tax, to 10 percent. If a beverage contains up to 10 percent or more, naturally, of vegetable or fruit juice, that beverage will be exempt from this regressive, deplorable, inexcusable, reprehensible, unconscionable, bad tax. So the amendment is not difficult to understand. I don't know how much debate will be required to