

It takes away the whole concept of what I think public power is all about, trying to provide low rates, serve the public, and recognize it is not...if you want to manipulate the rates, if you start breaking away from cost of service, then I will be glad to offer some amendments to allow low-income individuals out there struggling to meet their energy payments at their homes to get a break, and we can start seeing what happens. I think once you start down the road, you'd better be very careful of what consequences, and I don't want to start down the road at all, but at least as limited as possible, that is what it should be, and I would recommend voting against the Maurstad amendment and then adopting the committee amendments.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you Senator Wesely. Senator Beutler, on the Maurstad amendment.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Crosby, members of the Legislature, this particular amendment effectively guts the committee amendments, and if the committee amendments are gutted, I am not in favor of 828, I am against it. Not that that matters all that much, but I think an important policy decision is involved here, and that is, are we doing this as part of a Jobs Quality Act, as part of a concept for large projects where a board, involving the Governor, controls and sees what is going on in the overall project, or is everybody and their brother piggybacking on this to be able to do economic incentives without a thorough examination of what those incentives are and what they mean and who they discriminate against and who they don't. Now let me tell you, there are businesses out there right now that are not too happy about this idea, these special rates. There are businesses out there right now who are going to be discriminated against, frankly, and it may well happen in the future that there are going to be businesses out there who are competing with one another who may be discriminated against. And so to me, at least, it is extremely important that we are talking about something that is a statewide project, is responsible, the Governor is responsible, and all of the package is part of one deal and we know what that deal is. If you allow the committee amendments not to be adopted, there will be discriminatory practices. You may see a situation, for example, where one utility is competing against another within the state for businesses. Come to our district, come to our district. There is going to be within the state whipsawing. I have said to the utilities, and I am real disappointed that this has come up, but I said to the utilities, we want to consider what you