

a special interest group. Now we have to turn this tax over to a committee, at the county level a five person committee, three of them from the lodging industry, two from a selection from the Chamber of Commerce. Now after this tax is imposed, the Legislature loses total control of where this goes. We levy the tax, we take the responsibility for the collection of this money and then we turn it to a group, an appointed group of people, selected by the Chamber of Commerce and the lodging industry to spend it really as they see fit. We have lost this base. We have lost a potential revenue, and if we need a lodging tax, if it is really desired, I think we should place it in the state treasury, and if we want to promote tourism, appropriate the money to do it. I believe what will really happen if this tax is placed on, it probably, a large share of this tax will probably be used to promote not just the word "tourism" but conventions and a few of the biggest motels in the state and biggest complexes will get the most of the benefit. Now nothing stops them today, the motel industry from self-assessing the memberships and the motels a dollar apiece. If we talk a 3% tax here on a \$40 motel bill, we are talking about \$1.20. They can raise their bill by a \$1 and put it into a promotion fund of their own. There is nothing to stop them from doing it except they will pick it up on the motel bill and we take the blame for the tax because it is no longer a charge for the motel room. Let them promote their own. They are not a weak industry and they can promote their own tourism and conventions as they see fit and then they will be careful how they invest their dollars. I wholeheartedly support the kill motion and we ought to get it out of the way and go onto another bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Kahle.

SENATOR KAHLE: Mr. President and members, I find myself at odds with many of my colleagues this morning that I usually vote with but I have not changed my mind in the last year or two. I have always been in favor of Nebraska having a lodging tax, and as I was quoted in the World Herald, if any of you read it, that I still think it is stupid that we don't have one. My wife and I have traveled in all fifty states and quite a bit of Europe. Nearly every one, especially the tourist attractions, have quite a healthy tax on lodging. I wish I had all the money that I paid for lodging tax to help promote Nebraska. I don't know what chance this bill has. I think there are a lot of people against it. I think there are a lot of ifs and ands about how the money is going to be spent. I know that