

SPEAKER NICHOL: Debate has ceased. Who is closing on this? Senator Vard Johnson. Please.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, Senator Arlene Nelson came down here at the beginning of this year and one of the promises that she had made to people in her own area was that she would take a hard look at liquor taxes and also a look at the alcoholism programs and the mental health programs that we had in our state and if, in fact, she thought the liquor taxes were not adequate, she would work to effect a change. Well, LB 280 is Senator Nelson's bill. She has made it her priority bill and I think she has done a good job in handling it. But she was also able to quickly establish some allies from previous years, Senator Carol Pirsch who had worked on this so hard in previous years along with Senator Harold Sieck and Senator Ray Lundy, and they came right in and they helped Senator Arlene Nelson a great deal. But in the end, and Senator Pirsch has been so correct on this, this issue is one that doesn't simply get by the Legislature without some negotiation and compromise and resolution. In fact, I find it interesting that we have now spent two hours on a bill that is a negotiated bill. In fact, there are people behind the glass who are in the...who provide treatment to alcoholics and there are people from the industry behind the glass all watching this bill and I am confident that each one of those persons at this juncture has got to be happy that this was a negotiated bill because if it had not been a negotiated bill, it would have died unceremoniously and quickly. Given the difficulty it has just rolling along, thank goodness it was negotiated. In any event, I want to commend the Revenue Committee for working on this. I want to commend Senator Nelson, Senator Sieck, Senator Lundy and Senator Pirsch. They have brought you a bill that should pass, that will put money in the treasury and that is responsible. I move the bill.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Higgins, for what purpose do you rise?

SENATOR HIGGINS: Point of personal privilege, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Sure, state your point.

SENATOR HIGGINS: I just want to say this. No lobbyist