

CLERK: Mr. President, the first amendment to the committee amendments is by Senator Withem. Senator Withem's amendment is on page 1439.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. President and members of the body, the amendment to the committee amendments is...looks complicated. It's application is quite simple. What it does, and I'm sorry Senator Abboud isn't here because this basically deals with a portion of the committee amendments which Senator Abboud had adopted and he should be able to be here to defend his position. Basically what this does is it removes the Abboud amendment that was placed on in the committee which made the County Purchasing Act the Subdivision of Government Purchasing Act. Originally the bill was introduced at the request of the Nebraska Association of County Officials. They had spent all last summer going through the various purchasing requirements in the statutes and condensing them so it would be in one handy section so they would be better able to apply the law and they also did make some substantive changes which will be talked about later. During the committee hearing Senator Abboud made what was, I thought, a good faith effort to say that if this applies to county government, it should also apply to all subdivisions of government, cities and school districts. I am a member of the Government Committee. The Government Committee did consider this action. We did have a meeting with city officials, with school officials and discussed their inclusion within this bill at that time. I was convinced, hearing their arguments, that this bill should not be used as a vehicle to bring along the cities and the schools, that if there are problems in a manner in which cities purchase, problems with the manner in which school districts purchase, that they should go through the same procedures that the counties went through and that is take their time throughout the summer, study the problem, come to us with a bill that addresses their unique problems. I am convinced that the problems of cities and schools are somewhat different from those of counties and they should not be addressed in the same bill. I think it's also...should be part of our procedures that this bill should be the subject of a committee hearing to allow those that would be affected by a bill that affects cities and school districts to come forward and testify. For that