

ballot. That's simply not true. First of all, I'm not sure the process is even necessary, however, it is another safeguard, but the numbers involved, particularly with the Smith amendment are going to amount to three or 4,000 at the maximum for the largest phone company, not an unreasonable number by any means. And in the case of some of the smaller companies, it could be a very few, a handful of people. So that protection, I believe, is more than adequate, but as I say, I support the Smith amendment, but I think Senator Landis shouldn't create these false impressions, if you would, as to what is really in the bill.

PRESIDENT: Senator Abboud, do you wish to speak to the amendment on the floor?

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President and colleagues, I rise to support Senator Smith's amendment. I guess I don't really see anything wrong with the particular amendment. I don't think it really does a whole heck of a lot to deal with the actual issue of what we're going to be talking about, and since it doesn't do too much, I'm going to support it. And with that, I urge you all to support the amendment too. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Lamb.

SENATOR LAMB: Mr. President and members, this is a difficult amendment to decide whether to support or oppose. What it really does is make a bad bill slightly better. And so if I support the amendment, am I in effect making it so that the bill may have a better chance to pass? But the Smith amendment basically does not cure the problems that are brought by the DeCamp amendment. I would ask you to look at the Smith amendment on page 2, line 8, that paragraph is good except for one thing. It says the commission may, on its own motion, review basic local exchange rates of any telecommunications company if the company has increased such rates by more than 20 percent within a consecutive 12 month period. Okay, what does it say? The phone company can raise your rates by 20 percent for each year without the Public Service Commission becoming involved unless, of course, you go through the petition process which has been discussed earlier. So you are in effect giving those phone companies permission to charge 20 percent increase per year. Also at the end of the amendment I would point out that it says on line 6, page 3,