

federal income tax. And as a result, it has had a dramatic impact on our state revenues. But what this bill essentially does do is it provides a base. It provides a built-in base of 20 percent of federal tax liability. Now in the future, if federal government has changes in their policy towards spending, we get a different Congress, a different president some time in the future, we may see a time when the federal base will expand again. And we'll still be tied to that 20 percent base, and then in addition to that there will be an expansion. But at least in the foreseeable future that is not going to happen because they are having as many financial problems as we are. And there seems to be a thinking, across the country, that government spends too much money, especially at the federal level. Now my belief is that we should be making the decisions on these tax rate increases. When I first came into the Legislature there was a great deal of discussion about whether the Board of Equalization should be the body making these decisions. There was a group of four elected officials and one appointed official who was making decisions as to what the tax rate should be. Now we had a good discussion about that. I didn't see anything particularly wrong about the system when it was originally...when I originally came in here, but the majority of the body felt that the tax rate should be set by the Legislature. Now I have grown to feel that this is probably the best system because it does provide clear accountability to the people. Since we are the body that is making the spending decisions we should also be the body making the decisions on what our taxes should be to provide for the spending. I think it does provide for more accountability. So I wouldn't support a change, at this time, away from the Legislature making the tax decisions. But what we are doing here is allowing an appointed member, a governor's appointed person, making some decisions on our tax rates, much the same as Gramm-Rudman, where they give the decision-making...the individuals making the decisions on tax and spending issues to a bureaucracy we are in essence doing the same. We are allowing an appointed official to be making some rather hefty decisions on our tax rates in the amount of revenue that we will be having. It was unconstitutional, or it is my understanding that Gramm-Rudman is unconstitutional, or soon will be struck down. The federal government, the Congress has felt that it is not a workable approach to go with at this particular time. And it is my belief that the same philosophy, the same policy arguments against Gramm-Rudman can be applied in this instance. We are the elected officials. We are the ones that should be making the decisions. Now what will this actually mean if this amendment...if this motion by Senator