

other services. So there is going to be some change no matter what. We are at that point. You can say we never should have gotten here. That doesn't really matter. It is a fact of life...

SPEAKER NICHOL: Time.

SENATOR DECAMP: ...by virtue of the federal deregulation and all these things. I didn't get to the main point, but I'll try to speak again.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Abboud, then Senator Harris.

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President, colleagues, I think this debate is shaping up to one issue and that issue is competition, competition and when should competition take place. Now Senator Schmit has offered an amendment which I feel is a very reasonable amendment. We talked about the amendment earlier on General File, providing for competition where competition is allowed. Where competition exists there will be no regulation of the Public Service Commission. Now I thought that that was what this bill was all about, providing for competition so that telephone rates could go down for long distance. I supported that concept. Last year representatives came to me from the telephone industry and they said, Chris, we have a great bill for you, we have a bill that will reduce telephone rates, it will reduce telephone rates for long distance. I could support that. I felt that was a good concept, that is a good philosophy to have. Any time the rates go down, it is beneficial to my constituents in my district. Unfortunately this bill goes well beyond that. I don't know why it goes beyond. I guess they figure they had the votes so they decided to take that one next step and provide for deregulation at the local level. Now I'm handing out on the floor a letter that was done up by the National Federation of Independent Businesses, over 7,000 members throughout the state. And what these businesses are, basically the small businessman in the state, the businessman that owns the local clothing store, the hardware store, the grocery store, gas station, the one that has to deal with the day-to-day realities of increased costs from utilities, from taxes, the ones that are just trying to barely make it in this tough agricultural economy. They have one concern, and that concern is that if there is deregulation of local service what we are going to be faced with in the coming years is a situation called local measured service. Now what is local measured service? When you make a long distance telephone call, let's