

I'm willing to listen to further debate on it and see, you know, if there is a real need for it I guess...I don't understand the real need to take it out of the bill, Senator, so I'll listen to the debate and see what else...what other explanations there are for it.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Abboud, please. Then Senator Withem.

SENATOR ABBOUD: Mr. President, colleagues, I find this amendment rather interesting. I probably...not many...maybe some people on the Public Works Committee will find it interesting as well because I introduced a piece of legislation this year, LB 1187. LB 1187 was a rather simple bill, I felt, because what it did was codify existing rules and regulations that are presently being used by the Public Service Commission. It was simple in its approach. It said in figuring the amount of money that a public...or the amount of money that a phone company should receive in a rate regulation hearing, they should not include lobbying costs, they should not include legal costs for an appeal of a decision of the Public Service Commission and, thirdly, they should not include advertising which is meant in a way, I guess, of puffing up or making their company sound good, not involved in competition, just kind of an image building advertising. Now this bill, simple in its form, simple in its concept, was opposed by the phone companies. They told me that it really wasn't needed. It wasn't needed because the Public Service Commission, at that time, was already doing this. And if it was already doing this, why did you have to put it into statute. Now this bill that they have here, Senator DeCamp's amended version of LB 835, is I think an attempt to just put in what is already taking place with the Public Service Commission. I find it rather hypocritical on the part of some phone industry representatives that in some instances it is all right to put things in statutes, and sometimes it isn't all right. But, more importantly, I think it represents what they are trying to do here, what they are trying to do to the Legislature. They had this big bill, this big, thick bill, and they said what have we always wanted to do, what have we always wanted in state statutes. There is confusion in the telecommunications industry. This is our one opportunity to go for whatever we want, and because of the confusion, a lot of the senators won't understand what they are voting on, and they will go ahead and vote for it. Now I don't begrudge the phone companies for doing this. I think that is the way it is played around here. You go for whatever you can get. As long as you have those 25 votes, your special interest should get what they