

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Radcliffe has had...

SENATOR HIGGINS: Just call him Walt. Everybody else does, I guess.

SENATOR WESELY: ...has had a concern. We got the concern taken care of and I know the point you're making. It's a good point and it's funny, ha ha, let's go on.

SENATOR HIGGINS: No, it's not funny, Senator Wesely. It's a disgrace to this Legislature that a senator would tell the rest of this body that he has got the permission of a paid lobbyist to advance a bill and he hasn't done the CPAs or the Auditor's Office one bit of good with this. As I say, I had made up my mind long before this little epistle came out how I would vote on it, if it got to the floor and if it was within the call. I hope the news media takes note of this and hope they remember that Senator Ernie Chambers has been saying, in the five years I've been here, that the lobbyists have far too much control in this body. I don't think it's true of the lobbyists. I think far too many people haven't got the guts to say no to the donations that will be expected next year. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Abboud, did you wish to close on the...no, I guess it's Senator Wesely that's advancing the bill. Did you wish to close?

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, one last point I had to make on the intent and Senator Lamb has already spoken to this a little bit. We have a letter from the auditor. One other problem that we've had is those thirty some counties, let's see, 32 counties and 12 ESUs that didn't get their audits conducted by the State Auditor as other counties and ESUs did, have a right to get that audit conducted by the State Auditor under state funding because the others did as well and that's a point of contention in a lawsuit. Ray Johnson has now acknowledged in this letter that he will be performing those and I've wanted to make it very clear that our intent is that the money was put in there for conducting those audits. They shall be conducted under that. Those counties should not be charged. If they contract with a private CPA they should be reimbursed and hopefully we'll get this whole mess cleared up and move forward with the transition. But that should be clearly the intent of this