

be, yes, there should be an exemption for the newspaper industry because of the constitutional right to freedom of speech and the possible impediment of that by having a retaliatory tax or some retaliation against the newspaper industry by this body, or in some fashion to increase the tax beyond what is reasonable and fair in terms of what other people are taxed. And so I was at a point at which I was going to oppose the tax and support the Hartnett amendment. Well, what I have heard from the floor is an argument based almost solely on the question of this tax is a burden on this business, and it is difficult to collect, and it is going to be harmful to the small businesses in the small town, and all the issues you always hear on any tax. And so really the issue is...is based back again on they don't don't want to be taxed. They don't like the idea of being taxed, and nobody does, and you expect to hear that. And that is not really, I think, the justification that, in my mind, stands out enough to say that we should continue this exemption. Had I heard an argument that said, hey, look, if you start doing this, you will single out this industry, there will be problems in the future, freedom of speech is jeopardized, and other arguments like that, I would have responded positively. That is not what we are hearing. That is not what we are hearing, and more than that, the letter I have gotten from the Nebraska Press Association, likewise, makes no mention whatsoever of impeding freedom of speech or any constitutional rights whatsoever. It merely talks about we don't want to be taxed, it is a problem, it is a burden, we don't want it. Okay, nobody likes to be taxed. It is always a burden. It is always a problem. Nobody wants it. But it seems to me that you are talking about an exemption for a particular industry that I don't think I have heard justification for and, in that case, why exempt them? Why not give them the same old, old sales tax as other industry, because if you can't find a particular reason to exempt them, you ought not to exempt them. So in my book, that means oppose the Hartnett amendment and support the committee amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Will.

SENATOR WILL: Madam President, members of the body, I think that the merits of this specific proposal have been debated very thoroughly. I would like to make some general comments and I would like specifically to address them to Senator Horgan and Senator Robinson and the other freshmen. Every year in the Revenue Committee, we have dozens of bills that come in asking for sales tax exemptions. I guarantee you that every...almost