

damaged by a release. Now I will tell you, Senator Landis, that I did have lunch with an insurance agent and Mr. Jim Cavanaugh, a couple weeks ago. They insured me, or assured me that there is available insurance. And, to date, I can't really say that I know what companies offer the insurance, at what cost it might be to the marketer, and we proceeded with the fact that we were just not comfortable with the idea that there was available insurance out there at a reasonable cost to the marketer. As far as the inequity, Senator, those who can pay and those who can't, the bill does not really address that as has been the case, quite frankly, with the payment of the fees as well. There are probably those who can self-insure, as the rail roads do, that probably do not need the program.

SPEAKER BAACK: Time. Senator Elmer, did you wish to discuss the bill?

SENATOR ELMER: Mr. Speaker, very briefly. The real basis of the bill is two-fold. One is many, many small operators are faced with problems that are not of their making, by unidentifiable, or dead, or gone prior owners of sites where there are service stations, particularly in small, rural communities. And, secondly, without having an interim way for the cleanups to proceed and new equipment to be put in that is insurable, we need to have this interim fund available so that we will not lose most of our small, rural service people. That's really the basic foundation of the need. And as the new equipment is put in that's protected with anodes, that has been inspected and properly installed, the insurability will return and this fund will become, in the future, though we don't know how long, no longer needed. But we need it badly at this point. And I'd urge the advancement of 409. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Elmer. Senator Rod Johnson, your light came on.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To follow up my remarks to Senator Landis's question, I guess I would say that there is inequity in the whole system, or the structure of this whole process. But, unfortunately, I don't know, speaking solely from a personal standpoint, how we correct all the inequities that might be out there, because you have so many different size operators in the state. And, as Senator Elmer has indicated, we are trying in our best effort to try and keep both the large operators and the small operators in the