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LB 285

opening on AM1696, offered by Senator Beutler to the Revenue Committee amendments to LB 285. Open for discussion. Senator Landis, followed by Senators Beutler, Schimek, and Brashear. Senator Landis, on the Beutler amendment. Senator Landis?

SENATOR LANDIS: Could I ask Senator Beutler to explain some...I'm sorry, I had to step outside to answer some other questions for somebody else, and I missed the basis of your amendment. Senator Beutler?

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: That's probably because I didn't say a whole lot about it, Senator. But basically, it removes from the bill everything having to do with cigarette taxes that is already in Senator Brashear's bill.

SENATOR LANDIS: Okay. I oppose the amendment. By the way, I doesn't mean I oppose the Brashear bill. The Brashear bill is sitting on Select File. There may be many permutations that I support. What this bill constitutes is the continuation of LB 1085. There isn't a bit of new tax base in it. There isn't a mixture of ideas, other than one...there's essentially one idea here, and that idea is the extension of our existing revenue choices that we've made, a slight variation on how we word it with respect to the 5.5 on cars. It is a package of \$235 million. It has a bright line around it that I think makes sense. And I'm not asking to have it taken out. I'm not asking to have it lowered. I'm asking to say, will we continue in place the existing tax structure that we have? If so, this bill does that. It is significant heavy lifting. And if you take the cigarette tax out, we're just that much further away from filling the budget problem. If I understand Senator Beutler's idea correctly, I think he said...I think his notion is, make sure that there isn't enough in LB 285 to do the job; make sure there isn't enough in Brashear to do the job; and then basically get the body to do two pieces of work rather than one. Well, in fact, LB 285 doesn't work well enough. We have to do multiple pieces to get to the budget shortfall. But I don't think we do that by denuding LB 285 of the cigarette tax. I oppose the Beutler amendment.