

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Vickers.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President, members, I rise to support the Warner amendment also for many of the same reasons that have been expounded by other speakers but it seems to me that where we're at right now is at a crossroads of sorts. I think we all know that this money is going to be spent. We are trying to be presented as a conservative issue and if you don't raise income taxes you're not going to spend those monies, therefore, you should vote against raising the income tax. Well when you recognize the fact that the income tax is being cut back, not by a decision that we made but by a decision that was made in the federal government since our income tax rate is piggy backed on theirs. When you also recognize the fact that we've got every conceivable idea under the sun to raise funds other than right straight up front where everybody can see it on the income tax, whether it be corporate taxes, fees from various cash funded agencies including some of the commodity checkoff boards, even so searching for funds that were also proposals to do away with any of the per diems paid for many of the commissions and boards in this state, syntaxes, cigarette tax, alcohol tax, anything else we can tax, anything except right straight up front where the citizens know where it is coming from. So I personally don't think that this is an issue of whether or not we're going to spend that money. It is just simply an issue of how we are going to raise the funds where everybody knows where it is coming from or from some way under the table to get it. I personally think that if we adopt the Warner amendment and then send the bill back to the Revenue Committee and let the Revenue Committee hold a public hearing so that the public can come in and tell us whether or not they want those funds to be provided from various sources under the table any way except right up front or whether, in fact, they would prefer having an increase in the income tax so that everybody would know where the money is coming from and it seems to me that is a logical way to do it. Now I admit that many of the decisions that are based in here are based on things that perhaps are not having strictly to do with the issue at hand but I think the issue at hand here is one of enough serious of a nature that the public should be able to respond at a public hearing on this issue. So I would certainly support the Warner amendment and also his following amendment to return the bill to the Revenue Committee for a hearing. Mr. President, if I have any of my time left I would like to give my time to Senator Carsten for some remarks that he might want to make.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Carsten, you have an additional two minutes.

SENATOR CARSTEN: I won't take near that long, Mr. President,