

SENATOR CLARK: Motion failed.

CLERK: Mr. President, the next amendment is offered by Senator Nichol. (Read Nichol amendment (1) found on page 73, Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Nichol.

SENATOR NICHOL: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature, every once in while we attempt to do something that seems unfair, and in my opinion, I think we are attempting to do something that is unfair. You will recall that last year, it was this year, in fact, that we had LB 129 which was a tax but it was not a tax on everybody in the state. It was a tax on beer, wine and liquor. It was designed for a specific purpose, to provide services for alcoholism. Now the reason this is unfair in the Governor's budget is that it is a double whammy again. LB 129 is raising approximately \$600,000 more, I should say LB 129 and the other two bills similar are raising \$600,000 more than is presently appropriated. So the general fund is receiving according to the Division of Alcoholism figures approximately \$600,000 more into the kitty than will be spent. Now we are being asked for two additional cuts in the alcoholism program. One is an additional \$600,000. This is the second \$600,000 to be taken away from the appropriations made to the programs. Thirdly we are being asked for a three percent cut on top of that, the revenue from 129. Here is another triple whammy. What I suggest is that we take the three percent, take it like everybody else, but don't hit us three times. It is simply unfair. I don't think it is right. I don't think we should do it. I ask for your support.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Cullan.

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I rise to support Senator Nichol's amendment. Since I have been in the Legislature we have increased the alcohol taxes three separate times for the purpose of funding alcohol programs. Each time that those taxes have been increased in the last five years it has been the intent to fund alcohol programs specifically. This last two increases in alcohol taxes, LB 260 and last year's LB 129 both were aimed directly at providing additional services because of the fact that the State of Nebraska had decriminalized intoxication. What we did is we decriminalized intoxication without making any provisions to take care of those individuals who formally had been incarcerated. Now we just simply left them on the streets. So we have addressed this specific problem twice