

CLERK: Mr. President, LR 28 was a resolution introduced by Senators Warner and Scofield. It asks the Legislature to oppose the imposition of a federal motor fuel tax increase to achieve deficit reduction. The resolution was introduced on February 7. It can be found on page 634. As with LR 27, LR 28 was referred to Transportation for hearing. Mr. President, the resolution was referred back to the Legislature for action. I have no amendments pending.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Warner, please.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I'd move adoption of the amendment. This amendment (sic) deals, as indicated by its content, with expressing opposition to an increase in the federal tax on fuels for purposes of reducing the deficit at the federal budget level. As all of you are aware, there have been a variety of proposals that have surfaced in recent months, including a presidential commission which some of those who are involved have suggested that one of the ways to reduce the federal deficit would be to make a substantial increase in motor fuels tax. Primarily those areas that seem to be more sympathetic are areas which do not depend, as the western states, upon transportation to move goods, to do everything that is necessary when people live long distances apart. It is felt that it is certainly an unfair and an unrealistic hardship upon only those portions of the country, those citizens of the country who must, by necessity, depend upon fuel for their living, to get to their jobs, travel substantial distance. In addition, Congressman Smith...Congresswoman Smith is one of the co-introducers of a House Resolution 41, which also is designed to express the consensus of Congress to be opposed. There is a similar resolution introduced by Senator Simms from Idaho in the Senate side, and this merely would reflect the legislators opposition, as it is drafted, and concern of attempting to balance the budget on such a crucial and fundamental product as fuel is. It's been estimated obviously that the consumption of fuel could be dramatically decreased if this tax was at a very high rate, and if that happens then in turn we find ourselves not only paying more for fuel, but we also would find ourselves in the position of being less able to fund state highway system just by the mere reduction in consumption. And that could have a very lasting impact. So I would urge that the body adopt the resolution.