

PRESIDENT: (Gavel.) Could you please hold your conversation down a little so we can hear better. Thank you. Senator Wesely, please, followed by Senator Schmit.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I think that this issue calls for a little bit of discussion as we've talked in the past, and you've probably read about the idea of imposing an additional surcharge on imported oil with the idea of discouraging imported oil and utilizing the, I don't know what the plan was to utilize the resources raised from that. But perhaps some of that money would go to deficit reduction. I don't know the details enough of the issue back in Washington as to what they hope to do. But I, for one, plan not to vote for this resolution. That doesn't mean I'm going to oppose it as well, but it seems to me that we're taking a position here on national policy that has implications far beyond what we have the ability to understand in its complexity at this point. In my estimation we have a serious problem with oil importation. We still haven't conquered the energy problems that we have and that we need to look at, potentially, the idea of placing that surcharge on there to discourage that oil importation and try to build up our own resources. If we take such a step, if it can help with our deficit, ought that not be part of the discussion. Because of my idea that at least we ought to look at that idea and consider it, it seems inappropriate at this time for us to shut the door to that, or at least to recommend to the Congress that they not consider that option. I think every option ought to be laid on the table, to look at a number of these issues that interrelate. It's no different than when we fought the battles here about Highway Trust Funds and how they be diverted when we were having budget problems. And some people felt very strongly that should not happen, others felt that it's an option we ought to look at. Similarly, back in Washington I don't think we ought to shut the door and lock it, to at least consider this idea.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Schmit, please, followed by Senator Scofield.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, I rise in support of the resolution and I do so because I believe very emphatically that if we do not express our concern to the federal government that what appears to be a very ready and available source of revenue will prove to be too much of a temptation to certain members of the Congress, particularly those from the eastern