

CLERK: Mr. President, the next amendment I have to the bill is by Senator Smith. Senator, I have your AM3017 in front of me. (Smith amendment appears on page 1533 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT: Senator Smith, please.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body, I know that we've had a lot of amendments, we've discussed this issue two times before. This is a little different this time, but I still think it merits discussion, particularly since the Conway amendment was adopted a little while ago and we've talked a little earlier today about where is the other 77 million going to come from. This says in this amendment, which you've had sent around the floor and you have a copy of it laying on your desk, that basically if we're going to increase the sales tax to 5 cents and that 1 cent new increase should be diverted to the General Fund and then that money should be earmarked for this bill, or in other words, for education, that's the intent of the money when it goes into the General Fund. So if the Governor's people are correct in assuming that the 1 cent increase to...that would accrue to the Highway Trust Fund is indeed \$17 million, then here is \$17 million more, people, that we can use to come up with to fund the bill. It's that simple. I don't know how much discussion there is going to be on it. I know that we're...people might be getting tired of how much time we're taking on this issue, but I just think that in the name of fairness this is not a bill that we're setting out to try to put money in the Highway Trust Fund. This bill, we should be up front about the fact that this is for education equalization as far as how we pay for education and equity or fairness in how all the students of the State of Nebraska receive their education. With that, I throw it open to discussion. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: There are no other lights on, Senator Smith, would you like to close on your amendment?

SENATOR SMITH: Okay, I will just say in closing that I made the pitch. You can vote your consciences or whatever the lobbyists outside there are telling you you have to do and let's just have the vote. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. The question is the adoption of the