

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Schmit. No, Senator Emil Beyer, excuse me, and then Senator Schmit.

SENATOR BEYER: Well, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I'd like to have a couple questions of Senator Schmit, if he would answer.

PRESIDENT: Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Yes, Senator.

SENATOR BEYER: Senator Schmit, several years ago, I think since I've been in the Legislature, there was kind of a deal was made between the highway users and everything that there would be no attempts to lower the tax as long as you'd gone along with the federal phase-out in 1993. Now you want to extend it to 1997?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Pardon me, Senator?

SENATOR BEYER: You're asking to extend the tax to 1997?

SENATOR SCHMIT: No, we're not, Senator. We discussed it, but it is not...the time frame is the same as earlier. I'm saying that there was discussion relative to extension of the time, and that we discussed it, discussed it with Senator Warner, and I made a decision I will say by myself that we would go without any extensions at this time. And if, in fact, this added impetus to the fund and the added carrot, I guess you might say, to the purchaser of the Hastings plant or to a new producer, if that wasn't sufficient to bring them into the marketplace then I don't know what is going to do it. If it is sufficient, then I said come back to the Legislature, make your case at another time and take your chances at another time. That's where it stands now, Senator.

SENATOR BEYER: So you'll live with the 1993 phase-out?

SENATOR SCHMIT: I will live with it. And very honestly, Senator Beyer, the reason that I went along with it several years ago was because there was a general consensus that in some instances the three cents that was just a loss to the Highway Trust Fund and was not, in fact, being passed along to the consumer. And under this proposal there will actually be a net gain to the Highway Trust Fund at least the first several years.