

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Morrissey's amendment is adopted. Anything further on the committee amendments?

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Beutler would move to amend the committee amendments. (Beutler amendment, FA58, appears on page 1201 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I have passed out to you the two portions of my amendment which, basically, increase one of the fees over time, and also gives the Department of Environmental Control a duty to look at the possibility of private insurance in the future. Let me back up a minute and give you a little background and tell you where I'm coming from. First of all, I apologize for the handwriting. I usually have these typed up, but these are my submissions for the...to the left-handers federation of the world penmanship contest, and I just wanted you to see how qualified I am to compete in that arena. In any event, for those of you who are not so familiar with this fund that has been created to take care of contamination from leaky tanks, remember that that fund is primarily funded out of tax funds, out of gas tax funds. It's a state insurance plan, a departure from what we usually do. Usually somebody like the petroleum marketers would have their own insurance, their own private insurance. But the problems that, not they've created, but that their predecessors have created, by and large, are so large and so expensive, and the federal government is requiring that they be remedied so quickly that of necessity we've created a state insurance plan. That's what this fund is. And the average payments out of this fund are very large, around \$100,000 an occurrence, for example, to give you a feeling for the scale of the problems that need remedying. But I don't feel comfortable, in the long run, I don't think the petroleum marketers feel comfortable in the long run with this involvement with the government in their insurance. And I think that it would be better, in the long term, as soon as we can to get back to the situation where private insurance and the marketers, between themselves, through the adjustment of premiums, in the traditional way take care of this problem. And that should be possible at some point in time in the next five to ten years, because we will be over the hump. All this backlog of leaky underground storage tank problems, hopefully, will be taken care of. There will be new regulations, stringent regulations in place that will prevent