

the scale of problems that we have had in the past. And so insurance should be, private insurance should be a very real possibility in the future. So what my amendment is designed to do is to encourage, as quickly as possible, the marketers, the people who are benefiting from this fund, to get back to private insurance. And the mechanism that it uses to do that is to increase over time, beyond the rate of inflation, the money that they themselves pay into the fund through the registration, the tank registration fees, so that the proportion that they pay into the fund, over time, will get higher and higher. Right now, remember, there are two sources of revenue being paid, two really significant sources of revenue that are being used to maintain this fund. One is the gas tax on all the taxpayers of the state, and the other are these tank fees. Right now, under the current set up, the tank fees provide about a quarter of a million dollars, \$250,000 a year into this fund, as compared to about 3 1/2 million dollars a year, which is taxpayer gas tax money. So what my amendment says is that with regard to what the marketers pay in, with regard to the tank fee, that that's going to go up 5 percent a year, every year, starting January 1, 1994 for a period of four years, and then in 1998 it will increase 10 percent a year. And through that mechanism, hopefully we will put some mild but real pressure on the situation so that they're continually thinking about getting back to private insurance and getting back to it as soon as possible. The second part of the amendment also asks the Department of Environmental Control, in consultation with interested parties, to report to the Legislature every third year on the private insurance situation, so that we remember to take a look at this and get us back to our traditional ways of doing business as soon as possible. This amendment has been approved by the petroleum people, which I assume is an indication that they, too, feel uncomfortable with the whole situation and wouldn't be doing this, if they didn't have to. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. I do have a list of speakers. Senator Lamb, I understand you do wish to address this amendment.

SENATOR LAMB: Yes, Mr. President and members. I'm generally supportive of this bill, but I have a little bit of a problem with Senator Beutler's amendment and the tank fee in general. Let me explain that concern. This tank fee applies to every underground tank, no matter what the use is. In other words, a