

there are numerous old, abandoned sites that are not identified at this time. Some of them leak, some of them don't. If those don't need to be cleaned up, then perhaps some of the rest of these do not need to be cleaned up because they pose no real threat to the environment. I oppose the bill.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Robak, on the bill.

SENATOR ROBAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, I would just like to explain that I took LB 409 for my priority bill and I would like to tell you why. I believe this is an important bill to my district, because in my district, I have a lot of small towns that only have one or two gas stations and, obviously, they can't afford the \$1 million of financial responsibility that the feds say that they must have to meet the requirements. And even with the \$25,000 fee, it's much better than the entire cost of the cleanup, and it's either that or close up and they simply absolutely have to stay open. And, in my district, we need the small-town operators. We need the jobs that they provide but, more importantly, we do need the services that they provide. We need the gas stations to be there. And I think that this is an important bill to our rural communities and to the economies of those rural communities. And I just would hope the body would advance LB 409 today. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Robak. Senator Smith, on the bill.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few questions I would like to ask on this. I have to say that I was discussing another piece of legislation on the side when this was voted in. I did not vote for the amendment, the Beutler amendment to the committee amendments. But I began to listen then when Howard Lamb's amendment came up. Raised some questions in my mind, that's the reason I voted against the committee amendments as a result of the things that he had said. I've been listening since that time and one of the things that Senator Schmit said is, you know, the question is, who is going to pay the bill? I would submit to you that there are some other questions that we should be asking, and I'm going to ask a few questions, if I might, starting off with Senator Rod Johnson, if I could, please.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Rod Johnson, would you respond, please.