

go back to the committee amendments, was what, in essence, my bill, my amendment would do and I think the bill ought to move forward on that basis. If we need to look at it again next year or the year after for more money in that fund or whatever or in a fairer assessment, then so be it. That will be fine with me.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. We'll now go to Senator Lynch. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, you've heard much discussion this morning, but hardly any of it, in my opinion, goes to the point. This amendment that is being attacked at this particular point in time is an extremely, extremely modest amendment and it has been blown up as being unreasonable, and that's not the case at all. And let me reiterate a couple of points and make a couple of additional points. First of all, let me reiterate that the petroleum marketers supported this amendment. They had no objection to it. They are the ones who are the owners of a vast majority of the tanks we're talking about today. They are the owner of the vast majority of the tanks. The farm tanks are a small percentage of that. Okay, second point. Remember, that in this fund currently, about \$250,000 is going in that is registration fees. That is what the owners pay. Three and half million dollars or so is going in from the taxpayers. That's what all the taxpayers in the state pay. Under the new proposal, that 3.5 million can go to 7 million and the registration fee goes to about 800,000. So any way you look at it, what the owners are paying is about a tenth of the cost of the fund, about a tenth, a tenth of the cost. I went back and looked at some materials now with regard to what an owner of two or three or four tanks would pay for an insurance premium if they had to get this same kind of coverage under insurance, on getting their own insurance, and the cost of that insurance is approximately \$1,900 a year, \$1,900 a year. Now that same person for this same socialized insurance is paying two or three tank fees annually which amounts to two or three or four hundred dollars. So what we are subsidizing is the difference between \$1,900 and three or four hundred dollars, an incredible subsidization, a subsidization which I think is justified by the situation but a subsidization that should not continue and to suggest that the people who are paying the tank fees should pay double or triple the amount that they are being asked to be paid is not at all unreasonable in light of what they're getting out of this process. We are really being extremely generous with the