

opinion we ought to at least leave that cigarette tax potentially available for another year. Perhaps when we come back next session we'll have a better understanding of the economy as we fill out the next biennium budget and on into the future. That's just one reason, whether that will have to come to pass I'm not sure. But I am reluctant to raise the cigarette tax for a variety of reasons at this time. And even though this is apparently a good effort and a need, I will still oppose that at this time.

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. Next speaker is Senator Will.

**SENATOR WILL:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I rise somewhat reluctantly to oppose this amendment, largely for the reasons that Senator Wehrbein just referred to. Over the last few weeks the cigarette tax has become a hot topic. A lot of people have been discussing an increase in the cigarette tax to fund various programs. And I think that probably that indicates that next session we'll be seeing more than one proposal to increase the cigarette tax and use it for various different purposes. And I haven't spoken with the other members of the committee, but I, for one, as a member of the Revenue Committee, would like a chance to take a look at those proposals and weigh them against each other, and at that point have them all start from the same point next session, and take a look at those. I certainly want to emphasize that my opposition in no way is indicative of a lack of...an acknowledgement of the solid waste problems that we have out there that need to be addressed. I would defer to Senator Morrissey's judgment, ten times out of ten on solid waste issues. I just object at this point to the use of the cigarette tax as a funding source. Thank you.

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Thank you, Senator Will. Senator Rod Johnson.

**SENATOR R. JOHNSON:** Mr. Speaker, members, Senator Morrissey offers an intriguing idea of generating dollars to address a major environmental policy that this state is going to confront. The problem, as I see it, is not so much the idea, it's the timing. And, as we all know in politics, timing is essentially everything. We have a number of processes in the works right now that are ongoing, that will help us shape the direction this state is going to take in the next decade. Senator Morrissey is working with the solid waste...comprehensive solid waste study, which is an ongoing process that will go on for the rest of this