

come, in this case, out of the cigarette tax money? I think it's the logical way to commit dollars to an area that we all agree, all understand, all know is going to have to be addressed and...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: ...addressed quicker maybe than some of us would like to admit. So I would be one, at least, that at this particular point would be willing to support the Morrissey amendment.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Rod Johnson. Senator Morrissey, yours is the last light on. Do you wish to use this as your closing?

SENATOR MORRISSEY: I'll see if I get it all said or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members. Thank you, Senator Johnson. One of the things the Natural Resources Committee has always been frustrated in, Senator Schmit, Senator Johnson, and myself and others, is lack of money, lack of commitment to groundwater in this state. And that's what we're talking about here. Maybe I should have known earlier, maybe I should have, but it really didn't hit me, it really did not hit me until we went out and started working with the people on this plan. They want to do it right. The citizens of this state want to do it correctly. They want to cover the base line, the bottom line, they want to protect the groundwater, but they just don't know how they can achieve that the way things are now. The way their tax situation is they just don't know how they can achieve that. And I say the timing, the question on timing, maybe my timing in bringing this isn't the best. But the timing is right to address the question. The timing is right now. We talk about 200 landfills, unlicensed landfills in this state that are going to have to either be licensed, or closed. During the studies we have done in the solid waste management plan, we have discovered a total of 500 landfills that need to be either closed or brought into compliance. We're looking at a potential cost of \$50 million, \$50 million. And I want to start chipping away at that right now, at a million dollars a pop. Now we can just ignore them and pretend they aren't there, pretend they don't have the potential to pollute our groundwater, the same groundwater that runs into the Platte River, and then runs down state, and provides the drinking water for Lincoln and Omaha and all points in between, we can pretend that those 500 dumps don't