

hidden tax, it's a secret tax. To me it is a sneaky way... I'm not saying Senator Schimek is sneaky. She's heard me use this terminology whether they're raising taxes on, well they call them fees, motor vehicle registration cards, reinstating your drivers license and all such fees. They are taxes. They are taxes, and there is no other way to define it. I'm especially opposed to Senator Bernard-Stevens attempt for two reasons. First of all, the amount is exorbitant, it's exorbitant. Secondly, the purpose for which he wants to raise it is inappropriate. Domestic violence is not committed only in the context of people who are married, but you're trying to say there is such a desperation to find money without being forthright enough to say we should appropriate state funds if we think this project is worthwhile that we will hide the tax. And then say somehow there is a connection between getting married and domestic violence. The two may occur together but it doesn't mean that one causes the other. Sometimes things happen coincidentally and there is not a cause-effect relationship. Some people stay married forever and no violence is ever committed by one against the other. So it's possible for people to be married without there being domestic violence. There are people who, without the benefit or curse, as you will, of marriage will stay together forever, and there is no domestic violence. So the status of two people being together creates the occasion for this to occur, but it is not the cause of it. There are things that might be in a person when they first, or the two people when they first come together. There could be circumstances not generated by their relationship that will lead one to inflict violence upon the other. For example, having a terrible time at work, experiencing tremendous frustrations, or if you're a police officer taking out on your wife what you cannot do to people on the street because there will be a price to pay. Now, if we are going to support the fight against domestic violence at the state level, it should be done by way of an honest and forthright appropriation. This kind of methodology I am totally opposed to, and I am opposed now to increasing the fee for a marriage license. If marriage is good, and I know opinions may differ, there is no basis for taxing it at all. Somebody might say that this is like a user fee, meaning that you're trying to pay the cost of what is required to process this piece of paper that some people view as a millstone. But again, opinions differ as to exactly what all this is about. But I don't believe anybody can successfully argue that this is not a tax increase.