

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Would like to recognize a guest of Senator Avery's. Under the north balcony from Gretna we have Patty Headley. Patty, could you stand, please. Senator Chambers, on the Beutler amendment.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I again express support for Senator Beutler's amendment. Senator Landis' principle that he stated was too narrow. People should not be harmed in a space from which they cannot escape. He ought to consider people who have a right to be in a space and determine whether or not they should be harmed in a space where they have a right to be. Speaking for myself personally, I neither pray nor smoke. I don't know which I find more offensive, prayer in the Legislative Chamber or smoking in the Senators' Lounge, but when I know they are praying here I stay out of here. When they're smoking in the lounge, I don't go in there. So what effectively has been done, and I know it makes nobody any difference, is to deny me the use of the Senators' Lounge. Before it became a smoking haven, I would spend time in their on occasion. I like to look out the window and just sit, but I won't go in there now. I know that some of my colleagues are addicted and when you're an addict you cannot help what you do. So I'm not going to tell them to give up their addiction for me because they are too weak to do it, so I just stay out of their presence when they are under the power of their addiction and have to indulge it. But they need to start thinking when we come in with these bills to be so hard on juveniles about what they should and should not do, they ought to think about their own personal failing and weakness in terms of their addiction. If addiction shows a weakness and a flaw in character, does it matter that some people have the political power to get legislatures, state and national, to say this drug is legal, therefore, your addiction is allowed and socially acceptable, but if it comes to our children then we're going to drop the hammer on them and say we can be hard on them because we're stronger than they and we can do whatever we want to? I look at all of this stuff and I put it together. The state is formulating a policy in the exercise of its police power. It is authorized in my view under the constitution to enact laws for the public's safety and since it has been established scientifically and medically, bless you, Senator Pirsch, bless you, my child. It has been established that cigarette smoking is a health hazard not only to the one who smokes but to others who inhale the smoke. The state can enact laws such as this and