

expressways. So the implication is it's true what Senator Kristensen, this penny, you don't know exactly where it's going to go but the emphasis is going to be, first of all, on our state road system and then on the interstate and then the dollars will go toward expressway construction, and that's the only thing that I wanted to make the point that the odds are that this...if we slow down our spending, it will impact on the expressways rather because of the emphasis that the State Department of Roads intends to emphasize. So that's all I wanted to say. I oppose the amendment.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Maurstad.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This was one of those subjects where there was a great...great deal of discussion at the committee level. We got a great deal of information on both sides relative to this particular issue, and I think that the committee has advanced a good recommendation in this particular area. One...one point that I was surprised to see during the information gathering part of...part of our looking at this was that the increase in this rate is considerably slower than what was initially planned by the Legislature when they adopted the 20-year program. And you could argue that if, in fact, those rates would have been increased as initially planned, this rate increase might...might not be needed at this...at this particular juncture. However, I do believe it is...it is needed. The department, I also wanted to indicate, has altered their course. They've looked at the scope of work that they can accomplish in the next two-year period and they are not asking to do anything more than what they can handle because there are certainly constraints in this area outside of their control relative to what's available with contractor capacity or what's available to design capacity, engineers, so there are a number of factors that are...that are a part of this decision and I think that the Department of Roads should be commended on bringing us a reasonable course of action to follow during the next two years without severely or drastically changing the original course of the 20-year program. We've had, like most communities, most areas, there's been a lot of conversation in our district relative to gasoline prices and what I have found that most people are concerned about is the pump price, and I think there's been some articles in the newspaper and on the radio, on television, lately about the increase in the pump price of about six cents, getting ready for the summer traffic season. There are a variety of factors that