

change the pump price and I...I believe that that's what people are going to be concerned about. The pump price doesn't always change just with the change in this particular rate, nor does it change the same amount. In years past, one of the criticisms has been whenever there was a small increase in the variable rate there was a large increase at the pump and it was the...when you talked to the operators it was because of the rate increase, so those haven't always jived...jived either. So I think people are concerned about the pump prices. They're also concerned about having good roads. I think that we need to take the course of action that's been recommended so that we continue to develop and build our good road system, catch up for some work that wasn't done a decade or so ago, and I would urge the body to oppose the Hall amendment. Thank you, Madam President.

SENATOR CROSBY PRESIDING

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Senator Hall, on your amendment.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Madam President, and members, again I rise in support of the amendment. Just some information with regard to the variable tax since it's gone into place since in 1980. The motor fuel tax, at that time, was approximately 10.5 cents, total, and now the...what we're looking at in the latest figures right now that are April 1st of 1995, because I don't have May's, said 24 cents. So it has maybe not gone up as dramatically as was proposed from the time that the variable went into place or even the 20-year plan which, at that time, it would have been approximately 18 cents, but it has increased just since the 20-year plan went into place by 33 percent, and it's projected in this budget to go up over...over 10 percent if the 24 cents is an accurate figure right now, because we're looking at a 2.5 cent increase over the biennium. I understand the roads are important, and don't discount that, they're important and they cost money, but the question that this amendment raises is the one with regard to how we fund them and the way that we, in effect, allow the variable rate to be slid into the budget like this. And I know it's late out there and it's there to be found but you have to dig for it, as Senator Wehrbein said, and he was very straightforward and honest, as he always is with issues, but, clearly, it needs to be addressed here on the floor and we need to know that we're voting for or against, hopefully, a 25 million dollar tax increase. It