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that are not necessarily the best choices for us to make "healthwise"?

SENATOR CROSBY: Time.

SENATOR BROMM: Thank you, Madam President.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Bromm. Senator Jensen.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. This is the first time that I feel that we have a tax that will save taxes, and bear with me a moment. Each year, tobacco kills 2,700 Nebraskans and drains \$432 million from our economy. Though these statistics are alarming, what is even more disturbing is the fact that 35,000 Nebraska youth, younger than 18, will die prematurely from tobacco use. Tobacco-related diseases have a stranglehold on Nebraska's economy. Medicaid costs relating to smoking cost taxpayers almost \$40 million a year. Another \$203 million goes up in smoke as a result of lost income, productivity, because smoking-related death and disease. Smoking is responsible for 87 percent of the lung cancer cases; 82 percent of the deaths from chronic obstruction pulmonary diseases--emphysema, chronic bronchitis; 21 percent of the deaths from heart disease; and 18 percent of the deaths from stroke. Smoking during pregnancy is estimated to account for 20 to 30 percent of the low birth rates of babies. As much as 14 percent of preterm deliveries are a result of mothers smoking. And, sadly, smoking accounts for 10 percent of all infant deaths. So here is a tax that not only is taking the lives of our citizens prematurely, but it is a tax that is...that will, I believe, save us taxes in Medicaid costs, hospital costs, loss of time of working on a job. I have so many of my peers, in the last two to three years particularly, who have quit smoking, quit smoking because of health-related diseases, and I'm very pleased that they have because I certainly want them to be around longer. However, their life span probably has been shortened because of the time that they did spend smoking. I certainly am opposed to taxes, but this one I'm not opposed to, because not only I think it will save taxes in the costs that we're spending in healthcare costs, but I think it will also promote longevity in the workplace, certainly healthier lives, and so, for that reason, I do support