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as if you build a manufacturing plant and that manufacturing plant causes some pollution, well, then the cost of that pollution ought to be, in fact, paid by that plant. Well, I don't necessarily want to say that cigarettes cause pollution, but they do cause healthcare costs, which should be reflected in the price to the consumer. Does it make any sense for the state to offer a bargain on a product like cigarettes? And if you don't really charge the full cost, you are, in effect, doing that. I would also follow the argument that the money that is collected is not for general state fund. It is to address the medical costs that the state incurs because of the use of this product. So, with that, I thank you, and I do support the amendment reluctantly.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Raikes. Our next speaker is Senator Chris Peterson.

SENATOR C. PETERSON: Thank you, Madam Chairman, members of the body. I certainly think this has been very worthwhile debate and it's especially important to me because these are the issues that my constituents have come with. Like Senator Suttle said, we've gotten a lot of letters. I'm a cosponsor of the bill, I support the bill, I support the amendment, so I've certainly gotten a lot of letters. I've gotten a lot of letters from people that...from my district that I know that are in opposition to this and I've gotten a lot of letters from people that I know that are in support of this that have also included stories about friends and family they've lost to tobacco-related illnesses. But I think what it ultimately gets down is...to, as everything does here when we're on the floor, is making the decision, are you going to vote it yes, are you going to vote it no. And in order to do that, you always have to weigh the decisions. And the debate that we've had today I think has been especially beneficial because you have the most important issues that people have brought up in those letters to me. You have the loss of revenue issue. You have the personal choice issue. You have the tax issue. And in...in the other side of the scale, that we kind of always hold in our minds mentally, we have the health factor, we have the risk factor, we have the cost to the taxpayer. And I think that, as always, we are very aware of there are many times statistics on each side, and so one group can come out and say, well, this is going to do this,