

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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LB 683

hammered this out satisfactorily. I think this is one part of it. There's so many unanswered questions I just simply feel I'm uncomfortable supporting this amendment. But, once again, I recognize there is a need; I just haven't recognized the solution in my mind. And so I, at this point, would be opposed to Hilgert's amendment because it adds \$9.9, and I'll be opposed to Senator Thompson amendment because it's too much of a concept for my mind. But I would entertain a serious study that would focus on...that would say focus on something that maybe you can pick up from the body that we agree on so they can move forward with LB 683, which to me is very critical, especially in light of the cigarette tax and the cost of cigarettes going up. We're not clear on where cigarette tax revenue is going to be going. We have serious commitments to bond issues and so forth that I definitely think we need and we have to make that clear by state law, in addition if Senator Landis' bill would go, which this amendment could...my bill could go in Senator Landis' bill, but that is very uncertain at this point. That's the reason I brought LB 683 forward. So, at this point, I would oppose Senator Hilgert's amendment and oppose Senator Thompson's amendment.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. Senator Hilgert, you're recognized to speak.

SENATOR HILGERT: Thank you. Again, I would...we've talked quite a bit about the confinement facility itself. I would just encourage the body to...let's adopt my amendment and then continue a good, vigorous debate on the merits of the facility itself. It is \$3.9 million, but again that's \$3.9 million over 3 years. Senator Thompson, when Senator Brown had the amendment to reduce our budget, and it turned out to be a \$5 million budget increase on our first amendment to our budget bill, that's \$5 million we found, and that certainly is money that's taken out of the General Fund, this is only \$1.3. And again, my intent is frankly to minimize the damage. The damage that I see is calling for a tax increase. Of all the things that folks have always contacted me about, no one has ever called me and said, John, the taxes are just too darn low. So I would encourage the body to at least adopt the amendment. Let's take out the specter of a tax increase, and then let's deal with the merits of the confinement facility itself. Thank you.