

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 22, 2003

LB 759

happens to some of our cigarette tax dollars. And I remember sitting in Revenue Committee and listening to a tobacco wholesaler who showed us what was happening with his sale of cigarettes on the wholesale market. He was located in the Omaha area and the sale of his cigarettes did not go down. They did in Nebraska, but they went up in Iowa. So the same amount of cigarettes were being sold. The only problem was they weren't being sold in the state, and that is why I have a problem with border bleeding. I am going to support this division, but reluctantly, and because other states have seen the necessity also of raising the...raising their taxes also on tobacco products. And I keep hearing the same story like the rest of you do when you get back to your district--well, you know, run that state like a business; you have to cut out a lot of different things. Yes, all right, we all know what the top three users of revenue in this state are: Medicaid, K-12 education, and the University of Nebraska. But you go down that list. All right, whose grandmother are you going to throw out of a nursing home first? Now you think about that. That is one of the rising costs in our Medicaid program, are people in nursing homes. Get to the university, if...we are drastically cutting them, but that's going to mean one thing. The students are going to come out of that university with a higher debt than they'd ever realized because the university is going to have to raise their tuition. And we get back to K-12 education. All right, do you want...you want to cut some classes in there? We pretty much tell them what they can teach now. But if we cut back on the funding, there's going to be gnashing of teeth if we do allow that district to raise their levy. Property taxes are going to be driven higher again and that is...people don't understand that that is going to be the alternative. There are some other sources of revenue out there, but this body has seen not to use those sources. I have an amendment coming up that is going to...that will help a little. It's not going to solve all of our problems, but it's one way that we can capture some revenue that we haven't even looked at before. There are other revenue generators out there. I don't know whether we'll have time to get to...

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.