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FLOOR DEBATE

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agencies, on and on.      There's not much directly for smoking cessation.

SENATOR RAIKES:      Okay. Well, my question...and obviously, the committee has studied this and understands it and has decided that we need to go forward. If you're talking about a grant program that would use what is, in effect, General Fund money, or money that would have to be replaced by General Fund appropriations, I wonder if this isn't something that you need to back clearly away...or, completely away from during the times that we're in.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN:      Well, Senator Raikes, I would assume that's a matter of philosophy. Our committee, as well as many others in the past, have felt a strong commitment to smoking cessation. And as I said, we dropped our commitment from \$7 million to \$3 million. In this case, I guess part of it depends how committed you are to smoking cessation, and its resultant problems when...with smoking. And I...we felt as a committee that we ought to continue that commitment.

SENATOR RAIKES:      Okay. Thank you for that explanation, Senator. And thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BROMM:      Thank you, Senator Raikes and Senator Wehrbein. Senator Jensen.

SENATOR JENSEN:      Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I just thought I might elaborate and maybe help Senator Raikes understand. Several years ago, through the passage of LB 1436, which was really a bill that Senator Bohlke was proposing, was a bill to encourage particularly teenagers into getting involved in antismoking programs. And we took, out of the tobacco settlement funds, \$7 million a year upon arrival into the fund. So it didn't even really get into the Health Care Trust Fund. It was broken out immediately, \$7 million each year, to go into an antismoking program. That program then picked up the CDC recommendations of best practices. And it was a program that has given scholarships to schools for coming up with a good antismoking campaign. And by that program, we have seen a really rather dramatic reduction in teenage smoking. And