

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

May 6, 2003

LB 283

raises the costs of a can of beer by one-half a cent per can. It's, I think, 12 cans in a gallon, the way I understand, that raises it 6 cents. A half a cent, what would the...happen to the other cent? I would guess that they would probably raise the price by a whole cent and pocket the other half cent. So it's not going to be so significant. And I too received a lot of letters saying that if we raise the tax anything at all that people would quit drinking and they'd be out of a job and the wholesalers would all close down, which I doubt very much, because I guess I really don't know, but I would like to think in the last 17 years how much the cost of a can of beer has increased, and not many people has affected them, and we've not raised the tax on alcohol in that time. Several of you have mentioned about the dollars that it costs our state, in accidents and insurance and many things, but I'd also like to just mention what it does to even families. I had an opportunity about two years ago to visit the women's corrections facility in York. And we had the opportunity to sit down with four of the inmates privately, without any wardens or anyone around, to just get their perspective on what's happening in the women's facility there. And without exception, every single one of them said that alcohol started out...abuse of alcohol started out in their road to the problems that they had. One lady said she didn't even remember when her parents were sober, and what it led to her and her family. And if you think of the costs, plus the damage to the families...I was just thinking of how much...how many of the children in foster care have been results of abusive alcohol parents, wards of the state. Wife spousal abuse is something that's on everybody's radar screen. Probably most of the time, that is because of abuse of alcohol. There are just tremendous damages. And I don't think we can even put a figure on it. But Senator Beutler did do a good job of kind of bringing out some of those. Another thing I was thinking about is, maybe we ought to attach to this bill something about truth in advertising. We talk in truth about advertising. Has anyone ever watched an alcohol commercial that had any truth to it? Very little. They never show one side. Everything is pretty glamorous, and they don't show the damage that it causes, many times. So I think that I will reject the committee amendments, and vote for the bill without the amendments on it. And when Senator Jensen's bill come up, we'll look at that, and