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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 407

been spent. It was money carried over in the fund. So I believe in maybe a year ago, in the regular session, when we were looking for additional funds, that money was captured. I think Senator Jensen accused the Governor of that, and maybe that's appropriate, although I'll tell you, I did not vote against that hijacking, and I'm not sure Senator Jensen did. Maybe he did. I think he probably...or at least the body, I think, by and large went along with that. Senator Wehrbein mentioned young people. I would just point out to you that there was, in LB 1436, the Teen Tobacco Education and Prevention Project created. That program is over. That's no longer being funded. That one has ended. This is a different program. This is a...you know, a...new funding, I would argue, for a program other than the one specifically addressed to young people. So again, I don't want to try to convince you of...that this is not a good program, because I don't believe that.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR RAIKES: It probably is a good program. But it's simply the point that it is not within the very narrow focus that we have to keep now. It makes no sense to me to dedicate \$6 million of General Fund money in the upcoming biennium to support this program. So again, I urge your support of the amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Raikes. Senator Preister, on AM1802.

SENATOR PREISTER: Thank you, Mr. President. Well, we kind of heard duelling versions from Senator Jensen and from Senator Raikes. And I think technically they're both correct. We have a program that had been running for three years that had initially been funded for \$7 million a year, to the tune of \$21 million, but \$5 million was taken out of that to help balance the budget. The fund was already, in essence, raided at that time. The program existed for three years, and during that time we did see a reduction in the rate of teenage tobacco smoking. And I think that was good. That's healthy. We're spending...and Senator Jensen can tell us exact figures...but over \$800 million a year, I believe, in tobacco related costs in