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LB 407

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Schrock, I'm sorry, but you have spoken three times. Senator Louden.

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members of the body. I don't feel I can support this amendment on the Highway Trust Fund. I noticed here where there's supposed to be \$520 million, whatever, from some time or another here for the Highway Trust Fund, but we got...remember, the reason...part of the reason the Highway Trust Fund does quite so well is we have anywheres from 23.5 to 25 cents a gallon tax on fuel, and that primarily drives our Highway Trust Fund. It's set up so if there isn't a certain amount of money going into the Highway Trust Fund, why, the price of...or the tax on fuel goes up. I think the reason it does quite well is, you want to remember, we have the Interstate 80 across Nebraska. We have a lot of traffic across there so this is kind of an animal all of itself and I think we should do well to learn how it operates, because there are other areas in the state that could be tuned to work in the same situation. We got to remember, most of this money is spent on construction work. The only way that I could see that we could have the Highway Trust Fund cut down any is if there was some way or another that they would cut just salaries or administration or something like that. But when you start tinkering around with it, why, the first thing we know, why, we'll be back with our highway work years behind. At the present time, there's a lot of highway construction going on and I'm sure in the city of Lincoln alone that's quite an economic driver. Whenever highway construction goes on in an area, that's quite a little bit of economic development through the summer months in a lot of towns and areas throughout the state. I think the Highway Trust Fund has been doing quite well. It's something that works and, like they say, if it's not broke, why try to fix it? That's...I won't support this amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Louden. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: I would yield my time to Senator Schrock.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Schrock, you have almost five minutes.