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followed by Senator Beutler and others on the Bromm amendment.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. I stand in strong, strong support of the Bromm amendment, And I think we had talked when we were debating this issue several days ago, many of the statistics and details relative to the prevention program and what it has accomplished, but I don't think we can probably hear those numbers enough. Senator Bromm has passed out a white sheet, if you will, and I hope, colleagues, you'll take the time to peruse this, look at it, read it. There's some numbers; there is some statistics that I think are extremely telling. I agree with Senator Bromm. I didn't like that vote this morning on the MIRF money, and my...one of my communities has used that money and used it very effectively. But I can't relate the two. There is no way that I can reflect on a park bench or a decorative street light or a street, even, into an industrial park with the life of a teenager, of a young adult, or of somebody who comes into adulthood that has not had the encouragement to never, ever start using tobacco products. I think if you'd look in this statistic sheet the dramatic happening in 1999, the smoking rate among high school youths was 37 percent. By 2001, a year after LB 1436 was passed, the rate dropped to 31 percent. Tobacco control legislation works; 45,000 Nebraska kids, 45,000 Nebraska kids now under 18, will die prematurely from smoking. We, as policymakers, have at our disposal this very minute in this body on May the 15th, 2003, the ability to substantially reduce that number. That's good public policy. That's thinking public policy. That's why we were elected. That's why we're here in this body this afternoon. When you want to equate this with something besides lives, all you have to do is look at the bottom line, the dollars, the dollars that are created, the dollars that we spend in public health costs and in productivity. Over \$800 million annually it costs the state of Nebraska, \$800 million. It seems to me that's just slightly over the hole that we started with in our budget. If you don't just want to talk about kids' lives, look at the dollars that we're wasting. I think this is good public policy. We're talking about \$3 million a year, compared to the tobacco companies who are spending somewhere near \$58 million a year marketing their products. Do I begrudge them that? No, it's free enterprise and that's...they are trying to