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use of tobacco settlement monies. The reason I don't support this amendment is because I very much support the LB 692 method and procedure. We decide actuarially how much money can be spent into perpetuity, and we divide that up among the programs. My concern, it's been discussed here, is that \$2.5 million, well, it will kind of get us started, it's not really enough, and if we're taking it off the top, then we come back, well, gosh, let's run that up to \$5 million, or let's run that up to \$7 million. And then all of a sudden, every time you do that, the chances that this program will work like it was originally intended--and I agree absolutely with Senator Jensen, it was and is a good program--every time you do that, you destroy the chances that this program can operate as it was intended to do. So again, I don't support this amendment, not because I don't support tobacco cessation funding. I simply think it ought to be included in the LB 692 group, even if you have to simply expand the amount of the money up to \$52.5 million. But don't carve it off the top. That's not consistent with the good procedure that is now in place. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Raikes. Senator Byars.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, colleagues. I certainly hear where Senator Raikes is coming from. And I think in this body we always should be open to suggestions and looking at that. And Senator Jensen has always been open-minded when it comes to this, as long as these dollars go in some way to improve the health and well-being of the people of this state. I am in support of the Jensen amendment, AM2983. And I'd like to talk a little bit about, not the point that Senator Raikes is raising of tying it in directly with all the LB 692 money, but the importance of the fact that we not make this a have to come back to the Legislature and rehash this issue every single year. And I want to talk to you from a standpoint of being fiscally responsible. When you start to look at the annual health care costs related to tobacco use in Nebraska, they're at this point far exceeding \$400 million a year. And nearly \$105 million of that \$400 million are costs being borne by all of us as taxpayers, because they're funded by the Medicaid program. Almost 90 percent of these people, almost 90 percent of the people who are smoking and who are affected by these programs,