

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

April 1, 2004 LB 1090

suggest we have some work to do here in front of us, people, a lot of work. I'd like to see these amendments all pulled. Let's get on with the rest of the budget, on with our agenda, and we can come back if necessary. I don't like the idea of a special session come October or November any better than I think most people do, but I'm willing to do it. I think that's responsible. We have a lot of other work to do. We spent a full day yesterday on this. It looks like we're going to spend a good part of today on it. I think we need to get moving. To sum it up, I do not support changing the direction of our state policy. We traditionally have been using fuel tax for highway maintenance and construction. This is just one more diversion. If we do anything with an increased tax, a 1.5 cent a gallon, let's put it into roads. We have the needs out there and if we take this and start diverting this, it just lessens our revenue source for our needs of better roads and maintenance. Thank you, Senator Cudaback.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Baker. Senator Smith, followed by Senators Stuthman, Erdman, Vrtiska and Jensen and others.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President and members. We're certainly a citizen Legislature that is getting ready to face the consumer debt issue. I think Senator Bromm pointed out very appropriately yesterday that this is similar to a credit card. And we can put some labels to that, but it all boils down to the point where this is truly a new line of credit for the state. And my concern is, even though I try to weigh a special session, a new approach, all these different competing realities that we face as a body, and weighing the needs and resources and options that are available, and I arrive at the point where opening a new line of credit for the operation of government, I believe is the wrong thing to do. It may not violate the letter of the constitution but I certainly believe that it violates the spirit and intent of the constitution, that if you look in Chapter 13, Section I, it states that debt can be incurred for some very narrow purposes: one being war; two being some highways but in a very narrow way; some dams, for example, water retention, impoundment structures, that revenue bonds could then be accessed; dormitories, again revenue bonds. But this is a