

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

April 1, 2004

LB 1090

that and he did, I think, invoke the name of Senator Warner. But the name of the committee is not that important. And Senator Warner was very close to somebody who had been a lobbyist for the highway lobby, and that's how he got so deeply involved. So there's nothing sacred and holy about this Highway Trust Fund. As for what senator, somebody on the right-hand side of the Chamber was talking about the gas tax reaching a point that it raised the price at the pump to such an extent that people were going into Iowa to buy gasoline, I think that was Senator "Engelwood." You know why I call him that? Because somebody up here in the front referred to him as Senator "Engelwood." So whoever Senator "Engelwood" is, that's who I'm talking about. He said he didn't mind paying that extra money on the gas because it built better roads and he liked that. It will build better roads so that people in Nebraska can drive into Iowa and buy their gasoline there because it's cheaper than what it is in Nebraska because we got some cockamamie, foolish notion into the statute called the variable gas tax where you let those who are pressured by the highway industry manipulate the taxes that people pay on gas. They decide they want to build highways. What they're really deciding is how much money they're going to let these special interest powerful groups in the highway lobby earn for a given year. We don't let any other industry control the source of money which is going to be gouged from the public in that way. And don't even tell me about the Legislature appropriating money from a certain fund that goes for this or that. The Legislature is often like a running dog lackey behind these power...these special interest groups and will do whatever they dictate. That's why we're having trouble reaching a consensus here today. It's not people on the floor having a problem. They're getting their orders and instructions from outside those glass doors in the back of the Chamber. Those people out there are aware of the power that they have and I'm aware of it, too. But they know that I understand and they don't mess with me like they mess with my colleagues.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But they might overplay their hand. They can push you all and push you all to such a point that you at some juncture are going to say what Senator Chambers is saying may