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that that's productive for economic development, if we really believe that's a way to progress in the state, then we ought to pay the bill and do it. And it's within range when gas prices are yo-yoing by 10, 20 cents, a couple extra cents on gas tax is not going to be a major factor, in terms of use, but it could be a major factor in terms of these projects that we keep hearing about. I thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Kruse. Senator Stuthman, followed by Senator Chambers.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I've been listening very closely to Senator Wehrbein's comments, and I really think we need to take those comments to heart. In my opinion, what is happening is our costs have escalated dramatically on highway construction and remodel and repair. And you know that taxes haven't increased at all. And a lot of people are concerned--why are projects being put on the back burner? Well, it's because of a lack of funds, and everybody realizes that, and we really can't come up with a new project or a new intention--something that would really benefit us--unless we can support it financially. I hate to see that the gas taxes, you know, are increased, but I think we're going to have to take a serious look at it and maybe in the future we're going to have to do that. The thing that also concerns me is because of the energy prices, pockets have been filled because of that, and just certain pockets have been filled. The petroleum people, the energy--they have record profits at the expense of our highway department, at the expense of our transportation department, and at the expense of getting things done. So I think we need to take a serious look at this, and we have to decide, you know, do we want to continue our projects like we would want to, and can we afford to raise the taxes? So I think there needs to be something done in the next year or two, so...and I truly support that if we need to raise the taxes--if, you know, we want to continue these projects and make it better for the state of Nebraska, then we need to do this. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuthman. Senator Chambers on FA645. Senator Chambers.