

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

March 26, 2001 LB 657

then we told...we were told it was going to lapse. It hasn't, yet. And if you all vote for this bill, it won't. Things have a habit of just kind of rolling along. It's just as though we don't miss that 2 cents anymore. It's just as though we don't think that that 2 cents could be appropriately used for state buildings anymore. Things just kind of keep rolling along, and they'd certainly keep rolling along if about 13 years from now some municipality issued another bond, assuming and hoping for another extension of this 2 cents deferral. What would it look like ten, seven years from now if a new bond is issued and all of a sudden the municipalities come to us and say, well, you can't take away that 2 cents, we have issued bonds? Now we told the bondholders that this tax was only good for 15 years but we know you didn't really mean it, and we have issued bonds. We have got to fund our bonds. Well, I don't know whether they would do that or not, but why should we give them the chance? If bonding is so important to make this bill work, and incidentally I think that if you thought about this for even ten or fifteen seconds, you'd realize the bonding doesn't matter to this bill at all except as a lock-in, because if you want to adjust revenues in a city and you want to issue bonds, you can get money up-front, you can do that, and you could pay for those bonds with the revenues from the cigarette tax and you wouldn't have to have an explicit bonding and a dedication of these revenues. You would not have to do that. And both the cities of Omaha and Lincoln have more than adequate capacity to do that, and I'll bet you they have good enough lawyers and budget people to figure it out. But, it would be a lot simpler to bond this revenue stream and lock in the state, so that's what they want to do. Well, if they want to do that, I think they ought to get one shot at it, in a limited period of time, so that we're reassured that after that first opportunity is taken, we don't have another opportunity to lock us in to something that we might not like very much, even two or three years from now, let alone 15 years from now.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Open for discussion on the Wickersham amendment to the committee amendments. There were several lights prior to Wickersham's amendment. Senator Don Pederson, did you wish to address? You're recognized.