

March 13, 1980

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lobby, they generally effectively get what they want and in this case the most generous shrink in the United States. Now there are many people who think that the shrink is far, far too great and should be, in fact, shrunk and, you know, I would like to name some of those people but for various reasons the politics being what it is only one of them will I name and that is a person from the Better Nebraska Association, Governor Crosby, who has in the past spoke and argued for reducing the shrink. Now I think that this shrink amendment is just and fair. It is reasonable but that does not diminish the power of the lobby which may in fact have more to say about these issues than what is just and fair. The shrink is excessive. If the state is going to use its highway dollars to improve its roads and if we are going to continue and continue to raise the gas tax at great expense to the taxpayers of the State of Nebraska, and we have continued and continued to do that, the three percent shrink should not be, you know, the individuals in the industry should not be the beneficiaries of these continual increases in the shrink because everytime we raise the gas tax that in fact raises the shrink, the three percent shrink, whether it is there justified or not and thereby comes additional windfall dollars. You know I am almost desirous of voting against this bill if this shrink amendment is not adopted because it is a reasonable shrink amendment and in the end quite frankly this bill, while it may be needed for the state's highways, we do not need to continue to line the pockets of the industry. What we ought to do is limit this shrink to make it reasonable, to make it reflect what in fact is the situation as opposed to an extremely generous shrink. Many states in the Union do not allow for a shrink at all but this state does allow for a shrink and the most generous, offensive shrink at that. Three percent is excessive. It is wrong. We ought to adopt this amendment, straighten this situation out, add additional dollars to the highways for construction, for maintenance, for improvements. That is where those dollars will go. They are not going to go...no longer go into the pockets of the jobbers but instead will go into the pockets of the highway industry to improve our roads, to better our roads and to maintain our roads. With that, I will yield some time to Senator Johnson who would like to add a few words and then we will be finished with the close.

SENATOR JOHNSON: We are going to close in just a couple of minutes so we can vote on this issue. If in fact our tax goes up one penny a gallon and it raises nine million dollars, it raises nine million dollars....

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