

March 31, 1980

LB 722

SENATOR KAHLE: Mr. Speaker and members, it would be nice to get this extra money into the highway fund. I think we need it but I oppose LB 722 because it does complicate the situation and it does confuse our constituents. I think if we want to put a tax on gas let's put it on the way we are used to having it on there and when you drive past a pump you know how much of it is a state gas tax and how much of it the gas itself costs. It would be nice to have the extra money and I voted for Senator DeCamp's amendment. Maybe that was a little rich - but I think we are now putting almost four cents on so we are not very far off and we could have just as well taken that one and known what we were doing. With this bill I just don't understand it. I don't know whether there is going to be any split with counties or cities? It doesn't look like it and Senator Warner says there won't be if he can help it. I think this is wrong. So I cannot support 722. I believe we should stick with what people understand and what people know and not try to fool them. Thank you.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Warner, are you ready to make a motion?

SENATOR WARNER: Yes, I move the bill be advanced, Mr. President. I am only going to comment that saying something is about the bill does not make it so. Now there is nothing in this legislation that is hidden. The bill very specifically points out the tax is based on a percentage but it is calculated in cents per gallon and that is the way the collector charges, is the cents per gallon. It certainly makes no trouble at all for the transmitting of that information to the citizens and it certainly will be public. I am surprised that it would be a problem to adjust it monthly. It is not likely to happen in the first place. It seems to me the price of gasoline changes daily if not weekly now and that doesn't seem to be all that complicated. It is a fact that we had an extensive discussion with the Department of Revenue and the kind of forms are exactly what I have indicated to you. It is the same form they have now with I believe it was one line added and there is absolute control over the amount of the tax by the level of appropriation of this body approves and is subsequently approved or rejected by the Governor. So it has absolutely no ingredient, absolutely no effect as has been subtly suggested and not so subtly, I suppose, that somehow or other this was, I believe the call was the politician dream. The petroleum industry used a little different words originally and they were just as inaccurate. I would hope that the body would advance the bill so that we can protect the investment that the citizens of this state has made in their road systems.