

SENATOR CHRONISTER: Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I oppose Senator Remmers' motion to bracket the bill simply for this reason. He claims that he takes the same contention as Jerry Warner that this may not happen. That is true, but at the same time we must recognize the fact that the Reagan Administration has claimed that they are going to go through with this elimination of the tax and I think after the experience we have had the last week, ten days, on the MX Missile, we cannot underestimate the power of the administration. So it is my contention that we should have a vehicle in place ready to go and nobody contends that this is going to be an added tax later on that it is going to be an impediment or another demand on the general fund. Our only contention is in the event this cigarette tax is eliminated, we will take it up and then these programs will be funded and we don't plan them to be funded in any other way. So for that reason I oppose Senator Remmers' motion to bracket. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Vard Johnson, then Senator Cal Carsten.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, bracketing this measure would be a foolish move, in my view. The federal government proposes to eliminate the eight cent federal cigarette tax October 1, 1985, and if that happens, it happens. And that then means that the price of cigarettes in Nebraska go down eight cents a package. And if Nebraska then at a later date decides that it would like to increase its own tax from 18 cents to 26 cents, it does that. And, of course, the price of cigarettes then goes up eight cents a package. We are at a situation where we can simply by the passage of this bill and stripping away the earmarked programs which the Revenue Committee did, we simply keep the price of cigarettes at their current level and the state takes advantage of the federal government's decision to eliminate the federal cigarette tax. It is as simple as that. And we now have the money coming into our own coffers, which, incidentally, is \$12 million. I mean, it is not as though this is a small amount of money. And if you take \$12 million, \$12 million and divide that by four quarters in the year, that is 4 million bucks a quarter. So if you simply bracketed this bill from now until January in 1986...three, \$3 million, what you got if you simply bracket this bill, you are going to lose 3 million bucks. We are going to lose it that we