

could otherwise receive. We are going to lose \$3 million. We are going to lose as much money by bracketing this bill as we are picking up on the increase from the alcohol tax. Now are you ready to vote away \$3 million. Now the \$3 million may never come into being because the federal government may very well decide not to repeal the eight cent federal tax. Well, if that happens, it happens. But this state ought to have the providence and the foresight and the wisdom to be ready to pick up that federal tax if that federal tax disappears. In all candor, there is no social utility in reducing the price of cigarettes. There is no social utility served in reducing the price of cigarettes. Cigarettes are one of the major causes of illness in our own society. The higher the tax, the better the result. And if, in fact, the federal government is going to take off eight cents, we ought to be there right away to get the eight cents. To bracket the bill will cost us \$3 million for three months alone. If, of course, we lose an additional three months, it is a \$6 million cost. We shouldn't have that happen.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Cal Carsten, please.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, we haven't lost anything. We are not going to lose anything. With as many bills as the federal level has introduced to increase the tax, you can bet your sweet life they are not going to take eight cents off and let it go. They need the money worse than we do. And why not bracket this bill? If indeed by some strange coincidence it does happen, the bill is in place. Next January if this body so desires that they need that revenue desperately bad, they can add the eight cents and that is what it is going to be if the federal government does take it off. It is going to be an additional eight cent state tax. So what are we going to lose? We are gambling on losing \$3 million that is a pretty long shot at gaining, in my estimation. Regardless of what Senator Johnson says, I don't think we are going to lose a thing, but we have got everything to gain if we just bracket it and hold it and when the circumstances present themselves, if they are proper and correct, we can do it in January. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Thank you. Senator Warner, then Senator Hoagland.