

windfall for political subdivisions. Secondly, if it is not, then it reduces, does it not, the variable gas tax rate. Either it is a windfall with this new money or it reduces the variable gas tax rate, and what happens? In a period of declining gas prices when the pump prices are down, you are going to reduce the gas tax on the variable gas tax bases because we are not going to need as much money since we are going to be bringing it in from the sales tax on motor vehicles. Either of those two circumstances are unacceptable to me. I want to see...I want to see the General Fund crises taken care of too. I voted green on the adoption of the last amendment. I did not mean to do \$5.7 million of appropriations either to political subdivisions or, in essence, in the alternative if I am mistaken on that, reduce the variable gas tax obligation by \$5.7 million. I want to use the sales tax to support the General Fund. That is what this amendment allows us to do. I support the amendment.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you, Senator Landis. Senator Schmit, please on the Vard Johnson amendment.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, Mr. President and members, this will be a most interesting vote. I don't really know exactly how many votes Senator Vard has for it but I want to rise in support of it. I want to point out to...I know that Senator Hefner is deeply concerned about the roads in northeast Nebraska. We all are. I know that the roads funds are very important to all of us but I said earlier and I say it again, I do not believe it is fair for all of the sales tax on motor vehicles to go to the Highway Trust Fund. I think it makes no more sense for those funds to all go to the Highway Trust Fund than for the funds from the sales tax on farm equipment, for example, to go to the counties, or for the sales tax on sporting goods to go to the Game and Parks. I would like to point out that I believe it was during the special session when we had those horrendous cuts in many areas we did cut the Department of Roads budget by 7 1/2 percent. I think you recall how many dollars we cut out of them. As near as I can tell I believe it was \$1,500, not exactly a tremendous amount of money. I would hope that other agencies do not get that kind of an idea because they can guard those funds in the manner that we have with the Department of Roads. We will never be able to cut the budget in any regard whatsoever. I want to emphasize again, I have need for roads in my area. We have been treated well in my area. We can't complain with one or two little exceptions, but for the most part, I think that when we are in a position where we have to ask the university, we have to ask the subdivisions, we have to