

make little technical changes. They don't deal with the bill itself in its substance and if I might, I would like to at least have the committee amendments fairly quickly adopted and then we can go ahead and discuss the cigarette tax increase bill.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator DeCamp, on the committee amendments.

SENATOR DECAMP: I'll wait till after the committee amendments, I'm speaking on the bill.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Did you wish to address the committee amendments, Senator Haberman?

SENATOR HABERMAN: Just looking for the committee statement to see if I have one. I don't have one.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Haberman, are there certain questions you wish to address to Senator Johnson? Okay. There are no further lights on, Senator Johnson. Do you wish to close on the committee amendments?

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: I'd appreciate your help on the committee amendments. It is just a technical change.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay, the motion is the adoption of the committee amendments. All those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Has everybody voted who cares to vote? Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 27 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of committee amendments, Mr. President.

SENATOR BEUTLER: The amendments are adopted. Senator Johnson, do you wish to address the bill?

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Yes. Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, this bill is the second bill of the Kerrey package and it's a fairly straightforward bill. The current state's cigarette tax rate is 18 cents per package of cigarettes. This bill would increase the current state's cigarette tax rate to 23 cents per package of cigarettes. So the increase would be five cents. The bill does a second thing that I think is important to note and to call to your attention. We have historically allowed the folk who put