

young person can tell you, I'm not going to die from this like you're going to die from that. It is a terrible thing. I do believe that society has the right to try to control those things that have been demonstrated to hurt the public. There was a majority who voted for seat belts saying that inside a person's car the state can intrude. But when it comes to the air that people breath they want to turn around and say that the state has no right to say anything about that and protect the health of the public in a more direct fashion. They found out that women who smoke while they are pregnant can cause damage to the fetus and ultimately the child that is born, causing society to have to spend money. They'll give the argument in support of the seat belts that if a person is injured and doesn't have money to pay for his or her hospitalization the state, through welfare, has to pick it up. But they don't talk about these infants who are harmed as a result of smoking, that the welfare and the taxpayers have to pay and assume the cost for. So how are we going to take something which indirectly affects the health of the public, like seat belts, and say regulate that, but something which affects, in a negative way, the very air that people breath and say that the state doesn't have the right to do anything about that? That is preposterous. A lot of people have fallen prey to that wicked habit and they are simply too weak to overcome it. There are people who have the same problem with alcohol. All of these addictive substances, once they take over, are cruel masters. When that does occur we have to be sympathetic, but we don't have to allow them to create a situation that endangers all of us. This tax is not going to diminish, to any extent, the amount of smoking that occurs. But it can give a message as to the attitude the state takes toward it since it is too weak-kneed and jelly-spined to do away with the tobacco subsidy that the federal government gives and too weak-kneed to just ban the smoking every place where human beings go. So I'm asking that you adopt my amendment which changes the amount from seven cents to ten cents.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Rupp, then Senator Higgins.

SENATOR RUPP: Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I know this issue was debated the other day when I was missing. If the points were covered, I'm going to ask some rhetorical questions and some specific questions and invite anyone to answer. If they were covered the other day, I apologize. I'm going to