

adopted by the Governor's Health Promotion Coordinating Council, September 1985. Were you aware of this? Are you aware that smoking burns holes in our economy? Disease and lost productivity due to smoking are costing the United States \$65 billion a year, more than \$2.00 for every pack of cigarettes consumed, says a new congressional study. Were you aware? Do you know that the report coming out of Boston, Harvard University, report concludes that hundreds of thousands of low income American smokers might quit, and hundreds of thousands of teenagers might never take up the habit if taxes on cigarettes are high enough?

SPEAKER NICHOL: Excuse me, Senator Marsh. The call is raised.

SENATOR MARSH: Are you aware that as an economist one way to discourage smoking, talking about dollars and cents on the cigarette tax, we talk about market failure. People do not understand the results of the market behavior called smoking. By raising the dollar price we are providing information, we are saying this is a costly habit, it is not just in dollars, it is in terms of health implications. Some of you on this floor have been told you should not smoke and you still are. You have my sympathy. I hope I do not help pay, with my tax dollars, some of your costs. Are you aware that R.J. Reynolds, for almost 20 years, has refused to accept the overwhelming scientific evidence implicating cigarette smoking as the single most preventable cause of death in the United States? I have a lot of information. Are you listening? Do you want to know? There is no tax in the world on cigarettes that will cover the cost of the health care. We are paying for that. It is not an individual decision. There is real damage to a pregnant woman when she smokes and to the fetus. Passive smoking damage is documented. There is a higher lung cancer rate among spouses of smokers simply because they share the same air space in a home. It is a public health issue and, Senator Rupp, it is illegal to bring in cigarettes. If they don't have a Nebraska tax on them, someone is going to be watching Wyoming or Colorado or what have you. That is an issue that we are not addressing on our legislative floor. You can say that about so many different issues, but it is an illegal action. We do not condone it and we do not encourage it, and we will take active operational decisions to preclude that being a major problem. I urge your adoption of the moderate increase of seven cents a pack.