

some other branch of government. We can't lay down on the job and say, hey, we can't figure a way how to balance this budget, let somebody else do it for us. It is our job and we have got to do it and we can't go home until the job is done. Now I voted against the cigarette tax. I moved it along, it's true. I moved along a lot of the revenue raisers that died along the way someplace or other, like the Highway Trust Fund and different forms of revenue allocation, got them over to Final Reading and I created for myself a scenario that solved the budget problem, \$17 million of budget cuts and an income tax increase and it was a package I believed in. Now I can do that. And those are the policies I was most ready to defend back to my constituencies. I was ready to stand up and say I will tell you what, an income tax is the better way to go because it falls on everyone who is making money. This is a statewide problem. We deserve a statewide answer. It should be based on ability to pay. That is why I think the income tax is right. But I will tell you what, I have got to do my job. Now I don't think the cigarette tax is as good public policy. That is why I voted against it today because I had the pieces there to solve the budget problem with a higher quality public policy than to use the cigarette tax, but it didn't work. I don't have that option anymore. And now I am telling you I am going to do my job. My job is to balance this budget. I don't think a cigarette tax is as good a public policy as an income tax but it is more important that the budget be balanced. Then I get to use my most defensible revenue enhancement to do the job. Therefore, I am going to vote for reconsideration and I am going to vote for a cigarette tax increase. Why? Because the scenario that I think is best for the way to solve this problem, budget cuts and an income tax, apparently isn't going to be. This is the back pocket but I have got to go into the back pocket. I'll tell you what, we can't go home. I can feel that sense right now that says, let's get out of here, let the Governor come over here, yip at us, throw us a few vetoes and let's go home. But we can't. This is our job. We haven't done it well enough at this point but we can't stop doing our task until it is completed and it is not done. The Appropriations Committee has too clearly framed the message for us. We are going to be out of money in this fiscal year and we are on hard times next fiscal year. We just simply can't give up. Got to go back to the boards. This is my first chance to do it. Going to vote to reconsider.