

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, Mr. President, members, 835A is my bill and is not necessary to accompany 835 and so when I was asked by Senator Beutler if the opportunity would exist to place this amendment on it, I did agree to it. I apologize to Senator Robak, I apologize to all other members of the Legislature about the issue springing before it in this fashion. I think we all know that it was pending, that it was important and that it was going to come forth in one fashion or another, but I, for one, feel that it's important enough to take this step, that we should go ahead and allow us to consider this amendment and consider the bill so I would, obviously, oppose the bracket motion. The part of the bill that has interested me is the fact that for the first time outside of cancer research we're going to see some cigarette tax money under this proposal go into health care. One of the things I've long been concerned about is our health care system and the many problems attached to it. It is estimated for each pack of cigarettes, for instance, over \$2 in additional health care costs is brought to the system that we have in place and if anything, cigarette tax money ought to go into health care services because it generates so much health care cost. This is I think proven and documentable and most people would understand the impact of cigarette smoking on health and yet we haven't had cigarette tax money moving into the health care field until this proposal, and that's why I think it's so important. We have so much we need to do on health care and we have resources that are so limited and if we could take this step forward and do raise the cigarette tax to five cents, at least one of those cents would go into health care and that money I think would be very well spent. There are other good elements of the bill as well and I know others will address those but I'm going to focus in on the health care fact. We are trying to find ways to head off disease, to head off illness, to head off the problems that we've seen time and again in various areas in our health care system. The money that we're talking about, the one cent here, would go into Health Care Trust Fund over to the Health Department and be allowed to match money available from the federal government for various programs. I want to recall the discussion I had with Senator Robinson, I don't know if he's around, where he was concerned about any match costs to the vaccination bill that Senator Bohlke and I have. Well, this trust fund would allow us the resources to match, if we did need to, vaccination funds that are being made available by the federal government. It would allow us to match mammography funding which we have already secured about \$1.9 million a year over the next several years to