

SENATOR HABERMAN: Mr. President, members of the body, you can belong to the Roman Catholic church, you can belong to the Episcopal church, Congregational church, the Lutheran church, or a member of any other religious church or organization. You can be a member, you can go on Sundays, you can go on Wednesday evenings, you can do everything you can, you can tithe, you're a good Christian, you're a good person. However, if you smoke you're bad. You're bad if you smoke, regardless of whether you're a good Christian or not, regardless of whether you're a good father or mother or not, you're bad, bad, bad if you smoke. You know, that's a privilege of these people is to smoke if they want to. It's a privilege of the people to drink booze if they want to, drink beer if they want to, drive fast if they want to, it's a privilege. However, when it comes to smoking let's tax them, let's raise the tax on those smokers. You know, and it all started back when we built the Devaney Sports Complex, it started back then with taxing, build the sports complex. And I wouldn't be a bit surprised some day to see that we tax the smokers for the sportplex, or whatever it's called in Omaha. You know, when they started that they said we need \$75,000 for a study. So I talked to the senator who was in charge and I said, how do you think that study is going to come out? Well, he said, we don't know how that study is going to come out. We have no idea, but it's good for the state. And I was so surprised that that study came out and it proposed that we do build a Nebraskaplex, sports complex in Omaha. Isn't that surprising? We spent \$75,000 to find that out, but maybe we're going to pay for that by not the one-half cent sales tax in Omaha, but let's tax them cigarette smokers. Let's tax them. There aren't very many of them, they're all bad, they're all going to die of cancer. They smell. They can't smoke on the sidewalk, they can't smoke in the buildings, let's get them. People vent their frustrations on smokers, they don't on people who drive while intoxicated. No, the attorneys come to their rescue, and they say, this poor soul was on his way home, he had a bad day, let's put him on probation, let's don't put him in jail, let's don't fine him, let's put him on probation. That's what the courts do. But the poor smoker, oh boy, he's bad, we're going to tax him. And I'm not a smoker, but I used to smoke. But, you know, you get mail and you get phone calls from your constituents, and there's no one really supporting or representing the smoker out in the Rotunda. But there are plenty of people who are out in the Rotunda opposed to the smoker. So I say let's don't raise the tax on smoking. I can't