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**(Neb.)-Spurred By Whiteclay, Davis Introduces Bill To Increase Beer Tax**



By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 03/05/2013 08:12 AM

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - Alcohol problems that exist in Whiteclay inspired a Nebraska lawmaker to introduce a bill that would increase a beer excise tax by 5 cents per gallon.

Hyannis Sen. Al Davis told lawmakers Monday that the increase would generate about \$2.3 million annually over the next two years.

The money would be split evenly between the State Patrol Cash Fund and county law enforcement agencies. Davis says the extra funds would help increase law enforcement staffing to combat alcohol related crimes.

Jason Payne, president of the Nebraska Craft Brewers Guild, opposes the increase. He says it would hurt local breweries. Other opponents say the tax would ultimately be transferred to the consumer.

Nebraska's current excise tax on beer is 31 cents per gallon, which is higher than all bordering states.

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