

2004_6_25_FBX_Legislature raises tobacco tax, adjourns special session

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Legislature raises tobacco tax, adjourns special session

By Associated Press

JUNEAU

The Legislature passed a tobacco tax increase and adjourned Thursday without voting on Gov. Frank Murkowski's proposal to fix the state's chronic budget deficit.

Lawmakers approved a phased-in \$1-a-pack tax hike on cigarettes.

The bill will raise taxes by 60 cents a pack on Jan. 1, then raise taxes another 20 cents in July 2006 and another 20 cents in July 2007.

Murkowski also wanted the Legislature to put constitutional amendments on the ballot this fall that would have led to spending some Alaska Permanent Fund earnings on state government.

But Senate President Gene Therriault said there just weren't enough votes to pass the measures.

The governor also tried to get legislators to make changes to the workers compensation appeals process.

But unions opposed that change, and it also died with the session's end.