

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll address several points here. First, I'm in strong support of Senator Bromm's and Senator Bernard-Stevens' amendment. First of all, it's been brought to my attention in many areas that the state governments, not just Nebraska's, is very slow to issue permits from time to time and I think it might be something we could look at for next year or the year after to put in a similar clause for all state agencies that issue permits to have to do so within this type of a time period or have the permit be deemed approved unless legislatively arranged in a different manner for some of the more lengthy investigations for permitting or licensure that might be about the state. As far as the part about discovering we have another person liable than the one that was originally thought is also very good and is necessary. As to the investigations to determine which might be liable, I think Senator Bromm answered that very well. The process usually goes such as this. During a replacement of some tanks that are found to be leaky, the Fire Marshal's Office is responsible for the removal or for the regulation of removal or putting in of these tanks and if contamination is found, then the Department of Environmental Quality is informed and the operator of the establishment where the leak is found is required then to discover where the leak came from and usually an individual or a small operator would have to hire a specialty firm that has on its staff trained and licensed hydrologists and various types of people that are experts in soil and water contamination and the determination of where these contaminants come from and they can do that very well whether it's any kind of a petro chemical or usually pesticides too. And that part of the amendment is very good. But after discovering what the contaminations are and what their sources are, then they go ahead with their consulting firms to put together a remediation plan to clean up the problem and sometimes it takes the Department of Environmental Quality a long, long time to get those things evaluated. You know for when we do have a contamination it's to everyone's best interest to start cleaning it up as quickly as possible. So I really like that 120 day, that 120 day approval point. I would imagine any, almost any operator would hire a firm except perhaps the major, very large corporations that operate large numbers of service station outlets that have petroleum products such as Amoco or Exxon or Chevron or some of those people and with that I would ask you all to support Senator Bromm' and Senator Bernard-Stevens' amendment to the committee amendments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.