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in response to the hog prices that had been so horrible. People who were at this, we were involved with four different states. We had South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska state legislators at those conferences. And some of our legislation came about as a result of those conferences. We had some conversation with these senators from other states, and they have introduced some of the same legislation in their states. I attended a meeting in Alabama, the middle of January, with some groups there who were concerned about the market. And they knew we were doing some things in this area, and they wanted us to talk about it. They have the same problems. I am on the phone constantly with people from Missouri, from Kansas, from the northwest, Idaho and Oregon, and these people all have the same problem we're having in Nebraska. We need to do something to equalize the situation, and I think this piece of legislation does it. I would urge your support of LB 835. Thank you.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Senator Dierks, you're recognized to introduce the committee amendments. (See Standing Committee amendment, AM0814, on page 1068 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Mr. President. The committee amendments in this particular case actually become the bill. The committee amendment is a combination of three of the bills I introduced, three of the four bills we introduced. The one bill that's not a part of it is the one called country awards and labeling, or the labeling bill. Unlike grain farmers, most livestock producers have stood alone without government help. The recent multimillion dollar aid packages and meat purchases, although well-intentioned, could not help independent producers. In today's absence of a competitive market fairly distributing dollars back to the producer, government meat purchases simply enrich the already wealthy and highly concentrated processors and retailers. It was shortly after a national ag crisis that our current antitrust laws, like the Packers and Stockyards Act, were written and implemented to restore competition, lower prices to consumers, and allow for a fair allocation of income to all levels of production. For purposes...the purposes for LB 835 is to say that in the absence of a federal response to the problems facing agriculture, it's now time for the state of Nebraska to join many other Midwestern states and take matters into their own hands to enforce these laws. At these meetings I