

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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April 26, 1999 LB 630

rent to calculate the benefit. So I'd ask for adoption of the amendment to the amendment, and then we can get back to the more fundamental discussion in the underlying amendment.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. The question is the adoption of the amendment to AM1478 to LB 630. Those in favor vote aye, those opposed nay. Please record.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the adoption of the amendment to the amendment.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The amendment is agreed to. (Loud background noise) Everything all right back there, Senator Schmitt? Further discussion on AM1478, Senator Wickersham.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Thank you, Mr. President. I think that now AM1478 is in shape to address what is really the underlying issue, as far as I'm concerned, and that is whether the program that we would adopt would be one that is funded directly through an appropriations process and is accountable, or whether it's one that shows up as a credit on somebody's income tax return and isn't accountable to us. The other underlying issue I think, and the difference between this amendment and what Senator Wehrbein is proposing, is the issue of who is to receive the benefit. AM1478 is structured so that the landlord and the tenant would have to agree on some sharing. Now it may turn out that all the benefit would still go to the landlord, but it may turn out that some or all the benefit goes to the tenant. But, as I read Senator Wehrbein's proposal, all of the benefit, at least initially, has to go to the landlord and we would have to rely upon economics or other principles to believe that any kind of benefit would go to the beginning farmer. Now I think that I ought to make a comment in that I believe that the issue that Senator Wehrbein is seeking to address with this amendment is very, very serious, not only because we're losing people in production agriculture but also for the reasons that Senator Janssen noted. He still lives in a community of about 900 people, but that community is much different than when that community was surrounded by a large number of people engaged in agricultural production. The changes in our communities that are occurring because of the depopulation of the rural areas are serious and long-lasting. They're changing the fundamental