

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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desk so you could see how easy it is with one simple amendment to put LB 1222 into LB 1348. Now it's...it's hard for me to understand why Senator Vrtiska is so opposed to this because there are two things in LB 1348 that actually would benefit him greatly. First of all, in LB 1348 the cost-share percentage is 25 percent. In Senator Vrtiska's bill the cost share is 50 percent. So, by adding his bill to LB 1348, he gets the benefit of the drop in the cost share from 50 to 25 percent. Secondly, the cap on any individual grant in LB 1348 is \$75,000. The cap on a grant in Senator Vrtiska's bill is \$50,000, so Senator Vrtiska would get the advantage of another \$25,000 in cap. So, from my perspective at least, trying to look at the two bills as objectively as possible, it seems to me to be in Senator Vrtiska's...to his advantage to be a part of LB 1348. From my perspective, one of the things that troubles me greatly is when we try to multiply these programs and segment what each one of them does so that, first of all, you begin to develop a bureaucratic and administrative nightmare because you have people trying to interpret a large number of very complex and complicated programs. Why do we really need to do that? I don't think we do. And secondly, there is an element of noncompetition that seems to seep into these overall programs once they're segmented. For example, if you had \$200,000 in Senator Vrtiska's program for value-added agriculture,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...that narrow area, you would have to spend it for that purpose. But what if in a particular year there was another industry that offered just as many jobs in a particular rural location, but it wasn't value-added, but there was extra money in the value-added program but no money in the other program to bring it into existence? That doesn't make sense to me. It seems to me that whether it's value-added or whatever economic program or whatever industry it is that provides jobs you ought to have as much flexibility as possible to maximize the benefit to the rural areas by having this all together in one pot. I'd be interested in hearing Senator Vrtiska's defense for having a small sum of \$200,000 in one separate pot that can't be used for anything but value-added agriculture.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time. Senator Beutler, your light is next if