

SENATOR SIECK: Mr. President and members of the body, I heartily agree with Senator Wittala. I think he hit the nail on the head. We need good soil stewardship and who are better stewards of our land than the owner operator, the proprietor of the land. As far as controlling the size of the farm, this bill doesn't say anything about controlling the size of the farm. It could vary from ten sections to 160 acres or even 80 or 40. It really doesn't say anything about the size of the farm. The size of the farm varies so much in the State of Nebraska so it would be pretty difficult to say the size. What it does say is the large corporate entity coming in and gobbling up large sections, large portions of our land, that is what it says. I have a corporate farm enterprise that has bought several acres in Seward County. Now they want to get out from under it. But they want to make an enormous profit. The profit is so great that the individual farmers in that particular area can not buy it. It isn't the type of land that is highly productive. It is either in burr oak or pasture land. The only one that might buy it is the Game and Parks Commission. But even then I don't think they could buy it because of the price. But this is on the market because the corporate wants to get out but they do want to make a profit. I think this is what we see in the future. They do want to make a profit and that is why a lot of this land is bought. Just yesterday we had a dust storm in Wheeler County by a large corporate farm that owns land up there. They are not taking care of it. It drifted the roads shut. We need to prevent this. We don't want these large enterprises coming in. They are not controlling their land. We want people to conserve and watch what is happening to their land and controlling it. Someone said economics will take care of it. Well economics is not going to do us much good after it has blown away. We have several farm organizations that are supporting it and they are interested in agriculture. We need to take better care of our land and I think the farmer-owner-operator will do this. You look down the road, those people that own and operate their land are generally good stewards. The man that wants to buy a large chunk is only interested in the dollar, he is interested for his stockholders. He has to show them a profit and he will exploit the land. So I heartily endorse this 184 and I move for its adoption.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Barrett and then Senator Vard Johnson.

SENATOR BARRETT: Mr. Speaker and members, I rise with some mixed emotion to speak in opposition to 184. I know Senator Burrows went to great lengths to explain to us that other states surrounding Nebraska do have similar statutes on the books. I couldn't help but wonder if this is the rationale for passing a bill such as 184 with the far reaching ramifications that it does have. I know the hour is late. I will not belabor the point, but a couple of very quick observations. Senator Sieck