

March 5, 1982

LB 786

checkoff programs. Now very frankly, at one time we passed a bill in this Legislature that provided for a checkoff to be used for the construction of an alcohol plant of grain funds. The Attorney General ruled that we could not do that. One of the presidents of one of the boards wrote the Attorney General and asked his opinion as to whether or not we could, or the Corn Board, the Wheat Board, the Milo Board, for example, could jointly construct an alcohol plant. It was the opinion of the Attorney General that this responsibility...this kind of an activity exceeded the authority that was granted by the Legislature, and so representatives of those boards asked me if I would amend the bill, amend the law so that they might have that authority. Now I will agree fully here that they could enter into other contracts and there are those who will say we will start many, many small research projects and they will expand and they will duplicate other efforts. I think we have responsible people on those boards. We have legislative supervision. I do not think we need to be worried about that. The principal point of this amendment is to allow the construction, if they so choose, of an alcohol plant by one or more of those commodity boards. Now at one time or another virtually every politician in the State of Nebraska who claims to have agricultural interests at heart has extolled the virtues of alcohol distillation as a source for the problems of not only the agricultural community but the entire State of Nebraska and the entire United States. But when it comes time to doing something concrete that might possibly remove some of the obstacles toward achieving that goal, the job has never been accomplished. If we were to allow this to happen, and they might decide not to, but if they chose to do so, under this amendment it would be possible for them to do so. And I think that it is a good amendment and one which expands the authority of the boards. I want to make it clear, it expands the authority of the boards to do something themselves rather than to contract, for example, with myself to do it and pay me for it. There are a number of reasons why it might be preferable for them to do it themselves. And the limited time that we have available here today, I do not want to go into it to that extent, but I want to point out that at the present time, at the present time those boards do not have the flexibility or the capability to do those things that they would like to do or that they have at least asked me if they could do. On page 6 it further outlines the fact that the boards may set up research for development agencies of its own. I think it is a good idea. I think there are areas where it is a fine line. It is fine line, for example, whether or not the Wheat Board can contract with someone to do a job or

8384