

made a definite commitment to try to develop MTBE which is a derivative of methane and which can be produced from coal. So agriculture can continue to work on this process and try to develop that market, or we can take a back seat and let the industry, the coal industry, the petroleum industry supersede us. I think that this bill emphasizes again the development of by-products, the development of the co-generation possibilities and the fact that ethanol may, in fact, in some instances be even a by-product for some of the other products that are developed through this industry. It's been a long time, 18 years, since we've been working on this. As I said earlier, there were people who ridiculed the idea. But today...

PRESIDENT: (Gavel.) Please, ladies and gentlemen, we're having difficulty hearing. Please hold it down. Thank you, Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Today approximately one-third of all the unleaded gasoline sold in Nebraska is a blend of ethylalcohol and gasoline. As we look toward the future we are going to see those numbers increase. We are particularly going to see a large growth in the development of the ETB industry, and we think that we ought to take advantage of that. Many of you, over the years, have participated in these programs. Many of you have watched the industry grow. And I think that what we are doing here today is consistent with the idea of increased economic development for all of the State of Nebraska and increased market opportunities for the agricultural production of the State of Nebraska. I make no secret of the fact that I do not subscribe to the theory that agriculture is outdated in Nebraska. I still believe that the agricultural production of this state, both commodities and livestock, is more important than the industrial development we have seen in the last few years, although I do not downgrade the importance of trying to improve that. But the business of Nebraska is commodities and livestock, it always has been and it always will be. And to the extent that we can enhance that development, we should do so. LB 587 is a tool in the enhancement of those major industries, and I think the bill should be advanced. I want to say this, I have reviewed the amendments proposed by Senator Haberman, and I do not object to some of them. Many of the proposals he has embodied in his amendments are being taken care of today by the authority. I have several amendments which I will propose to his amendments, and I showed them to him several days ago. He will comment upon them himself. But I hope that you will bear