

this legislation because they don't think that they want to use these chemicals. We have...if it can be shown that biological controls or things of that type are going to be usable, or cultivation, those are open as control measures that can be used. The goal here is to make the state a better, more viable, stronger agricultural state. We do not want to have the things going on like there are in Montana and North Dakota where millions and millions of acres are unproductive and off the tax rolls at no benefit to anyone. We must prevent that. The state needs to make this kind of an investment to keep that problem up there and not in Nebraska, though we have already got it in every county in the state and every county needs to participate. During the last two years, I have worked very hard on this project and it's obvious that 15 or 20 counties out there are doing nothing, nothing at all. It's going to be hard for those counties to get in the program at this date but they're going to have to do it. It's going to be tough for them. I join with Senator Schmit in saying we need to find ways to provide for the necessary resources to do the job right with this bill. And I will be talking to Senator Johnson and Senator Dierks about some ways that we can provide additional revenues to put into this program that are not politically vulnerable from the General Fund. I think this is necessary if we're going to have an ongoing program. We know that noxious weeds are there and there to stay. We talked about eradication a little while ago. That's a goal that we want but we all know, realistically, we're not going to make it. So we need to go as far as we can. This bill is a start. I hope that we have everyone's support. Let's pass the committee amendments and pass the bill. I think we have talked and explained a good deal about it and I hope that everyone in here knows how important this is. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Johnson, would you care to close?

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Well, Mr. President, since the committee amendments largely become the bill, I guess I would be trying both to close and to make some closing comments on the bill itself. Let me just take you back to where we're at at this particular point if we adopt these amendments with some changes that Senator Elmer has offered. Forty-nine establishes responsibilities for the Department of Agriculture and its director. It basically reinstates the department back in the program which they have not been a participant in for the last two or three years. It allows the designation of the weeds to be taken out of statute and put into rules and regs, that reason