

being that it would be easier to change whatever rule...or noxious weeds might become problems in the state. Rather than having to come in and change the statute, the department director could make those changes. It also allows the department to supervise and direct weed control authorities. It helps them conduct investigations into complaints on noxious weeds and failure to comply with the law and it helps the county weed control authority with their weed control authority guidelines. It also, and has been mentioned by both Senator Nelson, Senator Schmit and Senator Dierks, imposes a fee...an increase in a fee from \$10.00 to \$40.00 on the registration of certain chemicals in the state. That is the funding source of this program. The bill also asks for matching funds out of the General Fund. Whether that is possible remains to be seen, but at this time I don't think that that should hold us back from at least advancing the bill. We can discuss alternative financing mechanisms, I think, on Select File if it becomes apparent that General Fund support is not forthcoming. Finally, a comment...away from LB 49, but a comment that has been brought up by two or three speakers today on the effects of chemicals and the use of chemicals in our environment and in agricultural operations. It is interesting to note that I think we see two locomotives heading straight toward each other. There is a growing and increasing concern by the public about the environment, about the use of chemicals or the growth of the use of chemicals in this country and I think you're seeing more and more positions being taken by groups against use of chemicals in our society. It is interesting to note, however, as well, that on the federal level to be in compliance with our federal farm program we have to basically meet, in many cases, soil requirements, the loss of soil, which means one of two things, either go in and start putting in major restructurings of our property, putting in embankments and dikes and so forth, or going to minimum till. Minimum tillage means probably use of more chemicals. More farmers I have talked to are suggesting they will probably be going to minimum till rather than doing major soil reconstruction projects on their property. It's less costly in the long run but it, again, hits up against that question about chemicals. I think you're going to see more chemicals used because with minimum till you're not actually breaking the soil as much as you used to and the control of the weeds will have to be done in another manner other than tillage of the ground. So you are headed in that direction. That has nothing to do with this bill but it was a prime opportunity to bring that up. I think the bill is, in its basic structure, in