

requested assistance in controlling predators and rodents on their facilities. The problem with this program at this particular time is, as we continue to show no interest from the state in funding the program, the federal government is showing less interest in providing matching dollars to Nebraska to keep the program going and keep their personnel here to assist us with the control of predators. It has come, I think, to a point where we now have to put our money where our mouth is. If we want the program, we're going to have to begin some sort of a contribution. I'm not suggesting that \$312,000 is the right figure. If there is a better figure that is more acceptable by the body, we'll accept that, but this particular figure is one that I think would provide a statewide enforcement program with 14 field people that would provide a uniform enforcement across the State of Nebraska. Lastly, I just say that the program, quite honestly, will have to take its place in spending priorities in this body along with all the others that we've been debating. It is my hope that, at the very least, that we could advance this bill across the board to Final Reading and then allow it to take its place in order and we'll see whether or not it is a high enough priority by the body to put it in the...either in the budget, the trailer bill or to pass this authorizing legislation. The program basically is already in effect, so it is not authorizing a new program. It is simply reinstating dollars that we once had in the program that we chose to cut out in 1985. For those that were here, you'll remember that we had to cut the program because of the funding problems we had in the mid-eighties. In that meantime we've been trying to get...limp along with the program that has received very little support, in fact, no support from the state, but there has been some assistance by private and political subdivisions on the local level that have actually kept the program going. So it is my hope that this body would see fit to advance the bill today. As I said, we can debate the figures and whether this is a priority at another time, but I think it's very important that we move this issue forward. With that, Mr. President, I would move for the advancement of the bill.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, Sir. Discussion on the advancement of LB 162, Senator Elmer, followed by Senator Wesely.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Mr. President and members, as vice-chair of the Ag Committee we've listened to this legislation and through letters from constituents in our