

how was this planned to be different than the program we had at that time?

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Well, Senator, I think all we added here in the bill is intent language. We did not actually change the statutory language as it relates to what constitutes a predator or some form of predator control. All we...the new language you find in the bill is actually more intent than anything else. It does not necessarily add to the program or to add to the number of potential predators that might be controlled under the program.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. I appreciate that. And then I was just told that the reason that you don't have the program spelled out in statute is that there is already statutory language and so you're just trying to get the funding level. Well, I don't want to belabor the point. I just was curious about the funding level and what we're hoping to accomplish. Clearly, we've had a problem since the time we lost the funding for this. We've had the federal funding continue. I've been contacted, as all of you have, and I do plan on supporting the bill but I just want us to keep in mind that there is a substantial increase in the funding and, as Senator Johnson said, we ought to consider that in light of other funding responsibility. So I would support the bill at this time.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Any other discussion? If not, Senator Johnson, would you care to close?

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Yes, just briefly. I appreciate the questions raised by Senator Wesely and the comments made by my colleagues in support of the bill. I would add that the program has done a lot of work in urban areas as well as rural areas of the state. It is available for all areas, so although I assume that most people, when they think of the Animal Damage Control Program think of it as a largely rural program, it does have...carry over into urban settings where skunks that might carry rabies or bird populations that may cause problems in downtown areas, the program is called in to address those problems. So the program is, as I said, not a new one. If you look at the funding levels, and I have them in case you're interested, there was a slow deterioration of state contribution. The federal government's contribution remained fairly consistent until we actually decided to actually end all state contribution and this basically reinstates the program and