

would stick this back into the budget. A little history about the aquaculture specialist. Number one, it was included in the University of Nebraska mainline budget request and passed by the Legislature not too long ago, but it was vetoed by the executive branch. And the theory at the time was the University of Nebraska had enough money within its budget that if it wanted to fund such a position it could do so on its own. That has not yet happened, nor do I anticipate it to happen as the university came back this year, did not include it, even in its priority request. Consequently, we are coming back this year and asking that it specifically be put into the budget. One of the things I'd like to stress to the body, and I hope I do an adequate job in this brief opening, is that many people, of course, think of Nebraska as the beef state. We have a tremendous amount of agriculture, we're an agricultural state, certainly, and a lot of people think that aquaculture is something that should be done in Louisiana and Texas and what have you, and certainly it is. But one of the things that we have found over the past few years is that Nebraska has a tremendous resource for aquaculture that people have ignored for many a year, and that is our Sandhills water that we have.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Excuse me, Senator. Senator Bernard-Stevens, excuse me, please. (Gavel.) The house is not in order, please.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assume that is simply because the membership will be voting for the amendment, and they already know how they'll be voting, so they're not paying that close attention, which would be just fine in that particular mode. The aquaculture in the State of Nebraska could be one of the most thriving, increasing industries that we have. The Legislature has always asked, what can we do for economic development? What do we need to do to help areas in our great state to improve the economics? I went to seminar after seminar, in the last couple of years, and one of the things that they stressed time and time again is that sometimes you have to take...not try to go out and get something that is brand new and bring it in, as many of us try to do all the time, but you have to look at what are our assets, what do you have out in the State of Nebraska that can be built upon, that can be improved, that can be...something grand can be created out of that? And we have that in the area of aquaculture. One of the things that is keeping aquaculture from expanding as fast as it probably should in the State of Nebraska is that we lack someone within the state with the technical