

Senators Wesely, Bernard-Stevens and Scofield.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, thank you, Mr. President, members. I, too, oppose this. I really don't have a lot of problem with aquaculture. I know it's an expanding industry in Nebraska, and it may well be that it will be very important, much more important in time to Nebraska, but I would oppose it at this time. And part of my philosophy in opposing this is the fact that we have even now have not funded, at least funded adequately, many of the ongoing areas, particularly in agriculture in this case, that need funding. It brings to mind the grain sorghum research in chinch bugs that we did not fund, I think a very deserving program that should have been funded at approximately this level. We did not put this money into the budget either. Grain sorghum has been around Nebraska a long time, and it's very critical to Nebraska's industry. We were unable to fund this. Another one is sustainable agriculture to the tune of \$100,000, we did not put into the appropriations budget because we felt it just did not fit. So I'm reluctant to put in, even though it's an expanding aquaculture, raising of fish in Nebraska is an important and expanding industry. I do not think that we should be starting new programs at this stage when we are really presently inadequately funding present programs that are very vital to Nebraska's agriculture, specifically, in this case, grain sorghum and its production. It would be very important to have this added to...this research effort added. We did not fund it. I think then it would be not right to go ahead and fund aquaculture which is probably not of quite as much significance as grain sorghum is and to move it ahead. So I'd urge that this not be supported at this time. Its time may come, I submit it is not here yet.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. I must cite my disappointment in the Appropriations Committee comments to this point. Let me reiterate again the situation. LB 561 was passed two years ago and Senator Moore was the...it was his priority bill. I'm disappointed Senator Moore is not supporting legislation he passed two years ago to get it funded. This...let me read to you exactly what it says on aquaculture. It says aquaculture shall mean the agricultural practice of controlled propagation and cultivation of aquatic plants or animals for commercial purposes. Unless the context otherwise requires, the term "agriculture" shall be construed to include