

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion. Senator Moore, followed by Senators Coordsen and Warner.

SENATOR MOORE: Mr. Speaker and members, once again, it's never fun to get up and try and argue against a program that historically I've always been for and I still am for. But I think it's important that the body look at all things considered as they consider this amendment. If you remember, go back to...first off a little history, there are two funds in the Natural Resource Commission. There is the Resource Development Fund and then there is the Soil and Water Conservation Fund that Senator Johnson is talking about here. If you go back a year, to last year, you remember that the committee increased funding, in this fund, Soil and Water Conservation Fund, last year from \$2 million to \$3.5 million, that was in our original committee recommendation. Then later in floor action, through another committee amendment, we increased that from \$3.5 million to I believe five, another \$2 million, to \$5.5 million, which was eventually vetoed back down to the \$3.5 million. So, last year we saw a tremendous amount of activity in this fund that Senator Johnson is talking about. And, of course, myself and Senator Warner and others, for exactly the reason that Senator Johnson just gave, argued and fought for that increased funding. Fortunately, with everyone's help we were successful in that last year. Now comes this year. As you remember, there are two funds out there. There is the Soil and Water Conservation Fund, which the committee has recommended to leave flat, the \$3 million level that we raised it to last year, not \$3 million level, \$3.5 million level that we recommended last year. So we are sticking by our guns last year, we're significantly, you know, raised it by \$1.5 million, the money that we put in there. The committee, the big, bad Appropriations Committee said let's keep that...that's a reasonable funding source, and it's something that we encourage to continue. On the other hand, the brother fund or the sister fund, dealing with Resource Development, the committee increased...last year the appropriation on that fund was \$700,000. The committee recommendation has recommended a \$3.4 million funding level for the other fund, the Resource Development Fund, a 500 percent increase in the Resource Development Fund. So I think it's important that we look at both of these funds together. If you look at both of these funds together, the committee has increased, over the Governor's original recommendation, by a million and a half dollars. You know you're talking...the