

because of the time frame, that we do not make a change at this point in the appropriation. Certainly, if there is use for the funds prior to July 1, that can be done. If there is a contract signed, even though the money is not spent, it could be encumbered because of a contract and then, secondly, if they are not used before July 1, because of the size of the amount, there would be an opportunity for legislative review come January in the form of a deficit bill to make the balance of the appropriation yet this fiscal year should that seem the desirable and feasible thing to do.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the body, I stand to support Rod Johnson's amendment which would...to reinstate the funding back to the Ethanol Board. The board, as you know, has been...I'm sure you're probably aware, I've been keeping you pretty well informed about what's going in Hastings, and I can tell you that they have about 20 bidders and they're very, very good prospects for the acquisition of the plant in Hastings. They're all reputable so there is going to be someone there that's going to be able to buy the plant, take over it, but where the role of the Ethanol Authority has to come into is where they expand. Right now, 4 million bushels of corn or grain goes through the process. The expansion efforts is where these folks can come in handy for the person that acquires the new...the plant. I'm asking you to support Senator Johnson's amendment to return the money back to them so that they can be in that position when the bidding process is completed and we can't wait until months from now or next year when we reconvene again. I don't have too much to say about this because I'm not too well versed on it but I can tell you that, for any of you that have visited the plant, it's important to the economy of not only Adams County but to other counties as well and for the State of Nebraska. As Senator Coordsen stated, we dealt with some issues with this earlier, we know how important it is to the State of Nebraska. I can tell you that I was told this morning about a new kind of fuel that's on the horizon which ethanol will be a part of. But, again, we want to be in a position in Nebraska to be a part of the future and this can be very much a part of the economy and the development of the economy of the State of Nebraska if we pursue this, don't let it go down the drain, we've got to have that money there for them to be able to assist for the expansion purposes after it's been acquired. I ask for your support. Thank you.