

like to get into record. We talked about how this would help to keep people in business, how it would help the owners of these underground tanks stay in operation. I think that is very important. Also, we adopted the Warner amendment which says that we are going to try to help those that had a problem before, and I believe...I believe that is all right, too. But I think we also need to consider that this is certainly going to help our environment. Leaking tanks throughout the state are causing a lot of problems for us, and not only in Nebraska, but all across the nation. So we need to address it, and like I said this morning, when petroleum products leak into the soil, it causes contamination, contamination to the soil, the ground, and eventually it gets into our underground water, and this is what we should be concerned about. I feel that we need to take a lot of action to keep this from happening and I believe that this bill will do that, or it will help do that, and this is why we need to. Also, if petroleum products leak from an underground tank, it could get into the storm sewers in our towns and our cities, and if the gases build up, it could cause a major fire or it could cause an explosion, and this bill will certainly help those owners of those underground tanks address that problem. And so I feel that we need the bill to clean up and protect our environment. Urge advancement of this bill.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the motion to advance? Senator Elmer, your light is on.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. I echo Senator Hefner's comments. As you all know, this bill sets up a method whereby there is from a 1/10th to a 3/10ths of one cent per gallon gasoline tax that would be used to fund the liabilities that may be incurred. This is to be paid by all users of fuels in Nebraska, all users. This bill does fill a very public need for all our citizens in the state. We have many of these tanks that are orphans. People have no idea where they came from, who had owned them in the past, that are causing problems. That is a public responsibility. Second, we have a public need to protect the environment from all of these types of situations. Thirdly, we need to be able to maintain essential services in our small rural communities that would lose them otherwise because of the liabilities and the need to meet those liabilities and to prove that these people can meet the liabilities that our federal government has required. This bill addresses those needs for all of the citizens of the state, and I urge the advancement of this bill to Final Reading.