

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Mr. President and members, I, too, briefly would rise to support this amendment. There has been concern expressed in the past, especially a year ago, about the amount of money that had accumulated in this fund and it has still not been spent and they do have some dilemmas about the amount of money to be spent and where it should go. I think this is an appropriate response to the concerns that are expressed in here about how that money might be spent. It simply makes public the proposal before it comes to fruition and I think it's a reasonable way to express our concern and our oversight over this and should relieve the concerns of many in here as to this money when it is spent, and we are all concerned about this. We have an obligation to those that funded this via the checkoff in times past. This should offer a reasonable way to do that and I urge your support of this amendment.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Rod Johnson, please, followed by Senator Schmit and Senator Haberman.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Mr. President and members, I've listened to several of the speakers telling that about the oversight that this amendment will provide the Legislature, but as I read the amendment I see no steps that can be taken by the Legislature to stop an investment by the board. Simply ask that the state investment officer look at the proposal and give comments to the Ethanol Board, the department and the Legislative Fiscal Analysis Office, but if we disagree with that investment, I don't see that there is anything in this amendment that would allow us as a Legislature to suddenly say, you guys shall not invest those dollars in that project, and so, again, I guess I don't personally see any need for the amendment. As I said, I'm going to oppose the amendment, but...and I have not talked to the corn growers, or the Ethanol Board, or anybody else about it, but just seems to me it's another hoop that they've got to jump through and for what purpose I'm not sure. I'm hoping that the decisions that that board is making they are taking into consideration, the cost benefit of investment in any project proposal and I can't see where this amendment will provide the Legislature with any greater oversight authority than we already have at the current level, so I plan on opposing the amendment.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Schmit, please, followed by Senator Haberman.