

SENATOR SCHMIT: Senator Rod Johnson, if you'd like to co-sign an amendment with me to limit their ability to spend the \$18 million until it comes back to this body, I would be willing to introduce that amendment. I have to tell you this, and there have been allegations that there is a personal fight between myself and some members of the Ethanol Authority. If it is a personal fight, I didn't make it that. I was here before they were and maybe I'll be gone before they are. That's up to someone else other than myself to decide. But I'll be very blunt, Senator Rod Johnson, that I have seen enough indications of lack of concern by well-intentioned uninformed individuals in government to know when I need to voice my concern. You ought to be a little bit interested that the Ethanol Authority voted with about four brand new members voting yes to spend \$10,000 to support the Clean Fields Development Coalition, a group of people who sponsored a fund raiser who participated and indicating they would sponsor a fund raiser for a candidate for the Congress. I don't know if that's the way we want those tax dollars spent or not. Number two, I read in the newspaper that they said they were going to hire a lobbyist for \$50,000. Then I saw a news release which said that they were going to...that they had appropriated \$50,000 to hire an environmental consultant. Now perhaps you can explain or someone else on this floor can explain just why this group needs an environmental consultant. I do not know that anyone on this floor couldn't handle those duties for the authority in our spare time after we conclude our ordinary work here at the course of a day. But as I have said earlier, nothing easier to do than to spend other people's money. There are a minority of the people on the Ethanol Authority today who were there several years ago. There are none of the...there are, I believe, only one person from the original Gasohol Committee who was there when this was created. That means that we have a very small proportion of the persons who were there for the purpose of providing experience and guidance relative to the spending of these monies. I visited with these persons and they have told me that they really want to do the right thing, and I believe they do. I believe they are going to be good members of that authority, but in the meantime it is imperative, I believe, that they understand that they will be held accountable. Now none of us are entirely without resources if we feel that an agency is operating in an irresponsible manner and I think we understand some of the things we can do as individuals if that should come to pass. I do not want to castigate the authority or staff or any of those persons who have worked a long time in this project. And I hope