

minutes.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thank you, Mr. President, and Senator Smith. I just want to say again, Senator Coordsen was on target with his remarks. We know that most of the ethanol game and the petroleum game is being played in the Congress at the congressional level. We have been fortunate here in Nebraska that our Congressional delegation has been, and I am sure always will be, very protective of Nebraska production and Nebraska efforts in this area. We are the ones here, ladies and gentlemen, who produce large volumes of grain, we in the Midwest. Senator Smith has pointed out to you that production credits are not anything which are new. Many of our surrounding states are in that position now, which places Nebraska ethanol producers at a disadvantage. We have done about everything we can do to encourage the development of an industry here. It is of no great benefit to Nebraska citizens if we must import all of our ethanol and it is certainly no benefit to Nebraska citizens if, in fact, methanol takes over the market. When President Bush was here almost a year ago, he threw down the gauntlet, in my opinion. Many individuals thought that the President came out here and said I am going to open the door for ethanol. If you read his speech and read it carefully, he didn't say that at all. He said there will be a place in the market for ethanol fuels but you are going to have to compete for it. There will be many other industries that will be trying to take over that market. If Nebraska farmers, Midwestern farmers want that, they are going to have to work at it. Ladies and gentlemen, the Nebraska Gasohol Committee, the Nebraska Ethanol Authority, and the Nebraska Legislature are going to have to be in the forefront to get that done. There are going to be differences of opinion, and again I want to say this, you have got to look at the past in order to know where we are at today, and you have got to be able to look into the future if you realize that...if you want to realize the success of what we started many, many years ago. It is not easy today to stand here and debate on Final Reading a bill which should not have been debated this extensively at this point. But I apologize for not having had the amendment to you earlier. It didn't work out. So here it is today. I am just going to say at this time, Senator Kristensen, I think, made a good point with the AG's Opinion. I am not concerned with the AG's Opinion. The AG has other things to worry about right now, I am sure, other than whether or not LB 1124 is constitutional. If it becomes unconstitutional, that portion of it, the rest of the bill