

is a basically state supported insurance program for basically petroleum marketers. But there are also those of us in agriculture, there are those in municipal and county governments which also operate underground tanks that would also be affected by this law, so it is not specifically pointed at one group. But I agree with the concept and that was partly the reason we raised the tank registration fee from \$25 to \$75, and I want more than anything else to see this bill pass because we need the bill, not only because we need the fund to continue to grow as we have more leaks that occur around the State of Nebraska that need to be cleaned up, but we also are working with a deadline with the EPA which is going to make a decision upon our program in Nebraska within the next several months. And so we have to recognize that we're also working with a federal entity that is going to be monitoring how we approach this whole issue of underground tanks and the support financially of the program. So I want the bill to pass this year. I have not had anyone argue against the fees on vehicle fuels and other petroleum fuels. It seems to be the tank fee which is hanging everybody up. I would simply ask that we adopt the Wehrbein amendment, leave the fee on the tank as it came out of the Natural Resources Committee. We can deal with the \$25,000 up-front cost, they're deductible, possibly on Select File if there are still concerns with that aspect of the bill. But I'd like to see the bill move this morning and in order to expedite that I am going to support the Wehrbein amendment and we can begin the discussion off the floor, I guess, on how we might be able to see the whole issue of moving toward private sector insurance at a later date.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Rod Johnson. Senator Wehrbein, did you wish to discuss your amendment further?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Just briefly. I guess I'll wait till close, but I want to clarify to everybody, it is not my intention to slow up this bill. I really, in fact, want to expedite it, as my sense on the floor yesterday that there was no opposition to the thrust of the bill, but there are to the details, specifically this rather aggressive registration fee, and that is really why I put this back in because I, too, strongly believe we need LB 409, and we're going to do a great disservice to the environment and to our consumers and to our owners if we don't do this. But on the other hand, it's wrong to have a bill go forward that is much too aggressive in the tank registration fee and that is essentially what I'm after and I would urge to