

naturally I would prefer, I think, the one that's coming up, Senator Johnson. I just...I think it's very difficult for business to operate and for many, many years, as you know, the Hastings plant was up for sale. It was not making any money and so on and so forth. A number of people tried to purchase it and so on. It was finally purchased by Chief Industries in Grand Island and just last year, basically, on part of the law that we passed, 20 cents per gallon for the producer's credit. And they, like the rest of us, have to pay the bankers. They made a commitment. They intended to expand that plant to double their production from approximately...well, it's producing about 12 million gallons now of ethanol in the year, and to double that, that would cost them somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20 million. That's no small change. And then to turn right around this year and say, no, folks, I don't think it's right, we're going to take that away from you again. The expansion of ethanol is particularly important to us right now. I don't think that we can forget the Persian Gulf War and that that helps our corn producers, helps all of our economy, sells more pickups, sells more hamburgers, whatever you want to sell. Might even buy me a new dress but I doubt it. It would probably take two loads of corn. But, anyhow, it just simply is not right to turn around give the credit one year, turn around and say, okay, we've kind of changed our mind, things got maybe a little difficult and put a business into that predicament. And I will see how Senator Smith's amendments go, but certainly I think that we should bring it back to where it was last year and that is the full 20 cents a gallon credit. I do commend Senator Smith for working on it and I will maybe trust her to follow her here but I will listen.

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the body, just a couple of comments concerning the Smith amendment to the committee amendments. Senator Smith, I appreciate your and Senator Schrock and if Senator Schmit was involved, certainly Senator Schmit and others for bringing this amendment to the body. It's for the...I agree with what Senator Smith is saying that...and Senator Nelson made some points that once we begin to set a policy and we have the producer coming into the State of Nebraska, either attempting to purchase, begin or in case of Sutherland, building, we need to have consistency of policy. And it's very difficult for people who are trying to find millions of dollars of finances when they go to the banks