

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Senator Schrock, you are next.

**SENATOR SCHROCK:** Mr Speaker, members of the Legislature, I wished I had a crystal ball and could tell what the ethanol industry is going to do in Nebraska. I have been waiting for a long time for the ethanol business to really get revved up. We taxed farmers for a year and a half, a cent and a half a bushel. We created this ethanol authority, and I think the average farmer out there will say to you that it has not accomplished what we wanted to yet. That doesn't mean it will or it won't but it hasn't happened yet. I guess my reservation is we pass a bill that creates a checkoff and maybe we will have to do it down the road, but I think the fund will be solvent for a couple of years, and I don't think we need to do this right now. I would admit that the proper place to fund the ethanol authority is from a checkoff, but I think it is premature. I hope three years from now there is 20 plants in the State of Nebraska and we have to check off corn five cents a bushel to fund it, because as some of you know, a study done by the National Corn Growers Association says that were it not for the ethanol industry in the nation at this time the price of corn would be 20 cents a bushel cheaper today, and I will guarantee you, it is too cheap right now. But I am going to oppose this because I don't have a crystal ball saying what kind of a construction schedule we are going to have on ethanol plant. The Hastings plant may be the only plant here in five years, and I think the farmers are a little disillusioned with what has taken place so far. And so I think it is premature to talk about a checkoff. If the plants are being built, we can pass a checkoff in 1992. We can do it in 1993. I think the fund is solvent until 1995 anyway, and so let's not incur the wrath of farmers and start talking about a checkoff for some pie in the sky thing that we don't have. Therefore, I oppose the Wehrbein amendment.

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Thank you, Senator Schrock. Senator Warner.

**SENATOR WARNER:** Mr. President and members of the Legislature, this is a difficult issue to follow. There are so many alternatives floating, combinations, and motivations, that you aren't for sure of, as each amendment comes, you are not really sure what does what. Senator Wehrbein, if I understand your amendment, the checkoff does not commence regardless of how much money is in the fund until 75 million gallons of ethanol or more is being produced. I don't know how the arithmetic, maybe my arithmetic doesn't work. If we are doing 20 cents and