

however. We're asking for at least approval of the creation of the fund so that if federal dollars would become available, if the state, this body, in its wisdom, would decide to put either cash funds or general funds into this program, that the fund would be there and available to put that money into. That's all the program does at this point. It creates a fund. We are not asking for specific dollars today, recognizing the economics of the situation. But at some point in time in this state's history, if in fact we decide that groundwater quality is a high enough priority, and important enough to make a commitment to, that we'll have a fund established and the DEC that can respond to this issue. I think the only other point I'd like to make is...the Governor, in his State of the State message, talked about creating a trust fund, so to speak. I don't know how this particular program might mesh with what the Governor's concept might be, but we're going to take a look at that before this bill obviously would pass. But I see it at least as an attempt by this Legislature to recognize that we will have groundwater quality problems in the future, and that we need to take a very serious look at how we're going to respond to those. And, as all of you know, we can pass public...good public policy ideas, but unless you have the necessary funds to support the program, then the program is useless. So that's what the...the program does, or that's what LB 338 does, is it creates a cash fund. At some point if we wish to fund it, we can do so through the appropriation process or through passage of some fee based program. I would move for the advancement of the bill.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Johnson. I will now recognize Senator Moore, followed by Senators Wehrbein, Morrissey and Robinson. Senator Moore.

SENATOR MOORE: Well, Madam President and members, as Senator Johnson touched on a concern, I think it's important that we listen to what he's saying. Because basically LB 338's one of those bills that we can all agree that we need to do. The thing that we can't agree on is how we're going to pay for it. And Senator Johnson, I need to ask you the question, if you can create a cash fund and you don't have a fee imposed anywhere in the bill to pay for it, is there anything else in the bill that will indirectly cause the need for General Fund appropriation? I mean, or is it really a bill that does nothing and costs nobody nothing or anything like that?

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Well the only concern I guess you could