

February 3, 1992 LB 349

to go LB 349.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 349 was a bill originally introduced by Senator Rod Johnson. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 16 of last year. Mr. President, at that time, it was referred to the Agriculture Committee for public hearing. The bill was advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments pending by the Agriculture Committee. (See page 491 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER BAACK: We have committee amendments from the Chair of the Ag Committee, Senator Rogers.

SENATOR ROGERS: Well, Mr. Speaker and members, this bill, 349, will enable the State of Nebraska I guess to begin, the way we stated it, the process of assuming responsibility for the administration and the enforcement of the Federal Insecticide Fungicide Rodenticide Act, commonly referred to from here on as FIFRA. I commend the sponsor, Senator Rod Johnson, for introducing this and I can assure you that, this body, that it was seriously reviewed by the committee. Every effort was made through the process to gather information and the members of the Ag Committee have, in fact, made this a...designated 349 as its priority bill. But many of you know, Nebraska is the only state in the country which does not assume control for the administration or enforcement of FIFRA. Currently, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency administers and enforces FIFRA in Nebraska. This bill would establish the framework by which Nebraska would assume the responsibility from EPA. First of all, I guess I would like to briefly give the explanation of the committee amendments, and then after that, I think we will let Senator Johnson explain the bill, but the committee adopted the amendment, first of all, to strike specific references to certain state agencies or entities of state government. The committee did consider a proposed amendment that would have mandated the Department of Environmental Control to be solely responsible for drafting and enforcing a groundwater quality management plan. And I think when we talk about a groundwater quality management plan, this is probably one of the, as far as I am concerned, one of the most important aspects of the bill for the simple reason that we are blessed with clean water in this state, and I think we should make every effort to keep it that way. However, the committee thought it was best to give the lead agency, the Department of Agriculture, the flexibility to draw on all available areas of expertise and not to give any