

February 3, 1992 LB 349

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Elmer. Before I proceed to the next speaker, I would like to introduce some guests of the Legislature this morning. They are the Nebraska LEAD Fellows, Class of LEAD Eleven, I believe it is, and they are in the south balcony. Would you folks please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Thank you for being with us. Next speaker is Senator Lynch.

SENATOR LYNCH: Question.

SPEAKER BAACK: The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do. We will now vote on ceasing debate. All those in favor vote aye, opposed vote no. We are voting on ceasing debate, have you all voted? Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 13 ayes, 12 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BAACK: Debate does not cease. Senator Schmit, you are next.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, I am glad the debate did not cease. I think it is imperative that an issue of this importance be debated and be debated thoroughly. As I said earlier, a year ago after the hearing, there was virtually no support for the passage of this bill at that time. Number two, if there is a problem today relative to the use of pesticides and chemicals, fungicides or rodenticides in the State of Nebraska, it is because the Environmental Protection Agency has been negligent in the administration of the federal statute which was passed by the Congress. I do not believe that they have been negligent. I believe the program has been administered well, economically, frugally, and efficiently. As I said, we were offered 44 people to start this program off almost 20 years ago. Given the nature of growth in government, today that would probably be 100 people. Any reasonable administrator would have been able to do it and, of course, the program then would cost not two-thirds of a million dollars but several million dollars. Now we have a very limited budget here. It is about \$225,000. That will, of course, grow, will grow substantially, and it will grow rapidly. But the real cost, ladies and gentlemen, is not going to be the number of personnel that are hired to administer the program. We can have that regardless of who runs the program. The real cost will be to the individuals and businesses, farmers, ranchers,