

difference in this amendment and some of the other language is it exempts the inactive or inert ingredients. As we all know, fertilizers vary widely in the amount of active ingredients. Anhydrous ammonia fertilizer is 82 percent nitrogen. Ammonium nitrate is 33-1/3 percent nitrogen. There are a wide combination of starter fertilizers which may have as little as 20 pounds of activated ingredient or even less per 100 pounds. Obviously, a ton of fertilizer that has 20 percent active ingredients as opposed to 80 percent will be taxed at 4 times the tonnage rate that anhydrous ammonia would be taxed at, since it contains 82 percent nitrogen. I do not believe that it was the intent of this body to be discriminatory in their taxation policy. There have been attempts, several attempts made here to change this and I am sure the most vigorous argument against the amendment will be that it will reduce the amount of income from the agreement, and that is correct. It will do that. But I would suggest that the amount of proposed income will be dramatically reduced from that which was intended by the fact that we gave the farmers of this state a grace period of about two weeks time during which time they could conclude their purchases of fertilizer and by giving them that grace period the vast majority of fertilizer that was going to change hands in the State of Nebraska did so prior to April 1. The adoption of this amendment is not going to have any significant impact upon the amount of income raised from this tax as of this time because most of the fertilizer has already been purchased. What it does do, it places into statute very distinctly the intent of this Legislature that we tax fertilizers based upon active ingredients. There's another reason why we should do that and that is because, in my experience as a farmer and as a commercial applicator, it is easier to overapply fertilizers with a higher content and, therefore, it ought...we ought to, if anything, encourage the application of some of the lower yield fertilizers. When we do it in this manner, in the manner that has already been adopted, we encourage the application of high concentration fertilizers. I would hope that if the body would adopt this amendment and then next year chooses to raise additional funds, the tonnage rate could be adjusted. The price per ton could be adjusted to raise the amount of money which was agreed upon by those individuals who made the agreement. I did not support the original tonnage tax. I do not support it now. I think it is wrong, it is unfair, it is discriminatory and it will lead to further abuses in time. In years to come, as additional need for revenue is present, there will be steady pressure to increase the 4 dollars per ton to 5, 6, 10,