

April 7, 1992

LB 754

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes.

SENATOR SCHROCK: The Ethanol Authority makes up a big portion of the producer credits for ethanol production. When would you estimate that fund would run dry?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: There's adequate funding in that as of now until July or June 30 of 1993.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Would you care to speculate on where the funding for that authority would come from after June 30 of 1993?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: To some degree it would continue to come as it's coming now which is a percent of the refund that farmers get for agricultural use of fuels. There is a summer study that Senator Rod Johnson and I introduced to look at this issue between now and next January when it will come up again, looking at perhaps, I don't want to prejudge what we may do, but looking at the two boards, operating them more efficiently, whatever, it is the proper thing to do at that time; but there is assurance for funding through next fiscal year up until July of 1993.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Would you anticipate a checkoff would take place sometime in the near future?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Well, it depends on what your definition of the near future would be. We have enough funding the way this cash flow is at this point for up to three years or perhaps a little longer. If at this point we would have enough even if Cargill doesn't come, there would be no need. Now I won't say where our funding would come from in the future. That is always a possibility as maybe other possibilities are. When a plant...one of the beauties about this particular bill is that there's no money spent unless we have performance, so no plants, no pay. And if we truly are running the protected bushels through this, if the plant would come I'm sure that there would be interest in several ways, but checkoff would obviously be one option when that point is reached.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Madam President and members of the Legislature, I would like to support Senator Wehrbein in his endeavors here. We can sit back and complain about the price of grain and do nothing about it or we can try and do something, and I commend Senator Wehrbein for trying to do something here.