

debate. It is not a change that has been placed in the bill, in this amendment. It is the original language that was advanced from Revenue Committee in the Standing Committee amendment. There has been no change since General File debate. We discussed it on the floor in General File debate, that it was, in fact, a transfer. With that I would argue that it is a good policy decision in light of the fact that we are talking about something that already exists in an obligation that we do have and we were obligated by a past legislature. I would encourage opposition of the Bernard-Stevens amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator McKenzie. Senator Wehrbein, followed by Senator Robinson.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members, I'm going to offer some observations perhaps as much as anything. I firmly believe deep in my heart that we have an obligation to the point on this that we should do it like has been suggested in this amendment. It is a little different than some of the things, once again that Senator Bernard-Stevens mentioned, about crime and some other things. It is a so-called gimmick if that's what you want to call it, for other uses. But this to me is an obligation that we've made via signed contract. We've had companies make millions and millions of dollars, I should have added it up, but I think it could approach a billion dollar investment in this state based on the strength of what we have said. On the other hand, I understand David Bernard-Stevens' argument about the intent. It's difficult to bind other legislatures. I would be very frustrated if would lose this legislation based on the fact on this wording because I sincerely believe the body at this point in time wants to support ethanol production in Nebraska as in willing to go to General Funds to do it as indicated in this bill. So if you're a purist and really believe that the philosophy, the policy ought to be as enunciated by Senator Bernard-Stevens, that this should be subject to annual review, that the Appropriations Committee would look this over annually, follow through with the intent of the Legislature and that this bill then could go forward and pass on Final Reading without any problem, then I would support that. I would support the intent language over the present language in the committee. But deep down I still believe that this is different, that there are signed contracts and that we properly are doing it this way via the transfer method. And I guess perhaps that's a difference in philosophy. I would be interested in other viewpoints on this including Senator Wittem which I know now is in the Speaker's