

you know, we talk about economic development and whether there's a full impact on this state. I'm probably in a better position to see the full economic impact of this on a monthly basis than anybody else in the body. How is that? Because I work for a trade association that employs steamfitters, steamfitters who work on ethanol plants, among other things, that's not their sole employment. But they do, and I think Senator Schrock and I were talking about this one day and I think there are about a couple hundred of steamfitters who work on the Cargill plant up in Blair that get hired out of the Omaha local. I don't know how many of them are going to be out in Aurora but there are going to be a number of them out in Aurora, so I do understand, on a daily basis, what ethanol production means to the entire state. I do find it kind of interesting that individuals who represent sectors of the economy that fought long and hard to get ethanol production credits into place are now talking about how maybe they don't benefit as much as they had indicated earlier. There's kind of a poor-mouthing about how this benefits the ag sector. I think it benefits the ag sector a great deal. I also know that it benefits the construction industry and other segments. A couple things I would point out is that the entire citizens of the State of Nebraska have already contributed handsomely to ethanol production, \$42.5 million in gas tax is the number I have from '93-97 that have gone into it. Do we have to spend more on it? Obviously, we do. We previous Legislatures, some of you can say previous Legislatures, I was part of those, so I have to take part of the credit or part of the blame for it, we've committed ourselves to production credit that we don't have the money at this particular point to pay. We do have to meet those. I don't think the purpose of the Bernard-Stevens, McKenzie, Wehrbein, Withem amendment is to pull away from that commitment at all. My problem is an institutional problem. My problem is that we do have a very historic principle of government and that is that one Legislature does not legally bind the next Legislature. If we start this precedent of an...

SENATOR LINDSAY: One minute.

SPEAKER WITHEM: ...end run around the appropriations process, and that's the way I view the amendment, the bill as it now states, an end run around the appropriations process where the Secretary of...the State Treasurer will make a dollar transfer regardless of what the Legislature does, that sets a horrible precedent. It really does. It takes away more and more