

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

April 12, 1999 LB 630

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I was the lone, dissenting vote in the Revenue Committee on this bill, and I thought it was appropriate, when we got to the discussion of the bill itself, to explain to the body why. And I know the assumption was that it was because of the LB 775 credits. And while that was a concern to me, that was not really the reason why I opposed the bill in the committee. I opposed the bill because I am not really sure if it's the best use of the money. If we are truly trying to "incent" the beginning farmer, I don't know if this is the best way to do it. If we're trying to "incent" business, I don't know if this is the best way. When you look at the LB 775 credits, you look at the fact that we required a new property tax...or property investment of \$10 million and 100 new jobs in order to get the credits. And yet this LB 630 only provides one job at the expense of one job. One person is going to leave the industry and one person is going to come in and take that place. We're not adding any property investment whatsoever. And is it really a way to help the beginning farmers? It's called the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Act, and yet there is no economic incentive which accrues to the beginning farmer; Senator Jones addressed this, and it was a concern to me. If we are truly going to help the beginning farmer, why are we not giving the money to the farmer, himself? Why are we giving it to the retiring farmer, to the owner of the property? Yes, it may encourage him to rent it out, but there is nothing that prevents him from renting his land out right now. The beginning farmer is merely a tenant, a sharecropper, they are going to spend time on the land, they are going to spend three years there. And at the end of their three years, they're going to walk away, and they're not going to have a piece of land to call their own. And I don't think that's what I call "incenting" someone to go into farming, because they still can't farm without land. And unless they have three good years, and I keep being told here in the Legislature that farmers are never having good years, that they're never seeing any profit that they can put away. And so how can we expect that they are going to have enough profit at the end of three years, that they can turn around and buy a piece of land? There's no agreement in LB 630 that guarantees that the owner of the property is going to turn around and sell it to the new farmer. I would be very interested and very supportive of any kind of measure that would do something like that, that would in