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April 21, 1999 LB 605

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Beutler, on your amendment to LB 605.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, this amendment would restore the 1992 agreement between those who agreed to put in...to General Funds into this program along with producer funds. Back at that point in time when this program was established, and it is the same program that we are now continuing, it was agreed to put in about \$5 million of General Funds, insofar as what's remaining here, and \$6 million of producer funds, roughly half and half. Now what this amendment does is say we'll continue to put in the General Funds which come in from all over the state but, no, no, we're not going to continue to put in the agreed upon percentage from the producers. That's going to be reduced in the last year from three-quarters to one-half, and that will result in a \$2.2 million decrease in what the producers had agreed to put into this program back in 1992 when we did this. And this bill is going to have a long time getting through this Legislature if we're going to keep rejecting all ideas that make sense and back off from agreements that pertain to the program at the time that they were put into effect. Maybe I'm not understanding some things or maybe I'm suffering from German Alzheimer's. I just remember the parts of the agreement that I liked. But the fact of the matter is I think I'm remembering it all and I think that was the agreement. And now we're moving away from that agreement, even though it's the very same program and we're moving away from that agreement, even though this subsidy represents a subsidy on top of LB 775. So what this amendment does is restores the three-quarter...the three-quarters contribution from the producers as opposed to the one-half that it's been reduced to in this particular amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Discussion on the Beutler amendment? Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor and members of the Legislature. I rise in opposition to the amendment that has been provided you. I think that we all understand what the economy is in the state of Nebraska right now as far as commodity and livestock prices. We have...continue and continue to make a substantial contribution to the Ethanol Incentive