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LB 870

relate to new applications.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Time.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Beutler. (Visitors introduced.) For discussion on the Beutler amendment to the committee amendments to LB 870, Senator Schrock, followed by Kremer, Jones and Wehrbein.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature, I rise to oppose the amendment but I think it's good to have a discussion and see where we are at, take a little breather here. Maybe somewhere down the road something appropriate would be...should be adopted, but at the present time, I think we're kind of...kind of in a state of adopting to the LB 1209. The permit fees that were generated in 1998 were approximately \$21,000, and for the first three months of 1999, about \$21,000. There are additional inspection fees that have been generated. The task force took a look at the fees and decided that it would not be appropriate, at this time, and if we review other Midwest states, we will find that General Funds pay for about 90 to 100 percent of the cost of their livestock waste management programs. I will tell you that, if you large...operate a large livestock facility, the cost of developing one of these waste management systems is expensive. It can be upwards to \$100,000 and, of course, it's even expensive for a little one, if you put it in a relationship to, say, a facility the size that Senator Jones has. In a survey of other Midwestern states, we did find that their...they did pay for the...the General Funds did pay for most of the cost of inspection and, by comparison, in Nebraska approximately 75 percent of the administration is paid for by General Funds. And additional producer fees may put our state at a disadvantage. I'm not sure that's the case because the cost of operating one of these facilities, the fees that have been suggested by Senator Beutler are probably fairly insignificant in comparison with the cost of the operation of that livestock facility. But I think we need to remember that the livestock industry is the foundation of Nebraska's agriculture economy, and a vibrant livestock industry in Nebraska has positive