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LB 605

become efficient. They ought to become competitive. And if there's going to be a big market in California, they ought to figure out how to make their product here and ship it to California at a competitive price. That's what they ought to do. That's the business model that made this country vigorous. Our country didn't become vigorous because we handed out benefits where companies were noncompetitive, because they couldn't produce in an efficient fashion without our money. This country became great because companies were efficient, and they were competitive with their money. I was more than a little bit disturbed when we had the hearing in the Revenue Committee and I asked a company representative whether he thought their company could ever produce ethanol...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: ...at a competitive advantage and be profitable? And as I...the best I can recall the response was that they couldn't exactly see that day coming but they were constantly trying to improve their technology and their methods of production, but they just couldn't quite see the day when they were going to be able to make it on their own. Pretty telling, I thought.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Senator Beutler, on the Wickersham amendment to LB 605. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, I guess I'm coming around to thinking that Senator Wickersham has it pretty much right, that we've probably been going a little too far with this particular program for ethanol anyway. There are other marketing programs I think could be very useful, but it's interesting that some on this floor speak of the deal that Senator Wickersham's producers made, then they want to extend that deal. But then in the whole scheme of things, they're breaking, themselves, the original deal because the original deal was three-quarters of a cent checkoff from everybody to match the federal funds, to match the state funds, to make it about 50-50 in terms of the sharing between sales and income taxes coming from all the cities and rural areas in the state, and the checkoff monies coming directly from the