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LB 605

that you couldn't even buy gasoline because we could not import enough from the Middle East. If we gear up to where we can...we could supply a lot of that from renewable sources, I think it's a real plus for our whole...for our whole state and our whole country. It helps in our balance of trade. Our balance of trade, we're always on the negative side, because we do not have to import as much oil, so it helps us in that way. In rural development, we spend a lot of money on rural development in developing areas in our smaller towns and most of these plants are located in the smaller cities throughout...throughout Nebraska. It broadens our tax base, it creates jobs. When it broadens our tax base, it gives our local schools the ability to raise their local effort which makes less reliance on aid to our education from our state level. And we also heard that the prices differ between where a plant is located and where it is not, and I contend that that's not necessarily true. Adams County is a corn deficit county. They use more corn than what they can produce, but whenever they cannot export corn on unit trains to California or wherever it might be, they have to go to some other town or some other county to get that corn. So that raises the price there, and I know a couple of towns in my district, a little town of Sedan, probably most of you don't even know where it is, but it has the ability to load unit trains and their price of corn is higher than what it is where an ethanol is. In Grand Island, the same way, they can load trains there and their price is most of the time two cents higher than it is in Aurora where we have an ethanol plant. The ethanol industry has had a struggle. Corn prices are low but we know what gas prices have been in the last year or so, some of the lowest level it's ever been. Ethanol had been selling for around \$1.20 a gallon and then lately it's been going for about 90 cents. So it has made it very difficult for them to produce. But I think we are lowering this, the checkoff, to a half a cent from three-quarters. I'm willing to do that for one more year to give an incentive to keep expanding the production. I think it's been a plus every way around. We are also lowering the incentive. It's been 20 cents a gallon for up to 25 million gallons, and now that we've expanded the gallons, it would be 7.5 cents for the next 10 million gallons, so it is reducing it somewhat. And I think it is something that we're willing to do because we talked about the deal, and I heard mention that the deal was when this, when I think it was LB 377, LB 377 was