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LB 605

problem, but also trying to be fair to everybody and recognizing that the general taxpayer ought to get some reduction in this program, and recognizing that LB 775 also applies and that there are a lot of other problems with the program anyway, I think it's only fair and hopefully acceptable to people to drop out \$1 million of this program which I think we could better use in other areas. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Beutler. On the Beutler amendment, Senator Schrock.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature, it's with some reluctance I rise in support of the Beutler amendment, but I do and I do because of a principle that Beutler brought forward to us, we knew it all along. I'm a little amazed that some ag organizations wanted to drop the checkoff from three-quarters of a cent to half a cent when I think the program has been so successful. But a deal was made some years back that part of the money would come from General Fund, part of the money would come from checkoff, but they seem to think that the corn growers should pay less money the final year. And Senator Beutler is absolutely correct, General Fund money for this final year would be \$6 million and he had an amendment drafted to drop it to \$4 million. In the spirit of compromise and wanting to move this bill, I suggested we split the difference which I would guess is still unfair to the General Fund because we're dropping that about 15 percent where we're dropping the checkoff on corn 33 percent. So from that standpoint, I support the Beutler amendment. It does save the General Fund \$1 million. That's not peanuts. This ethanol discussion will take place again next session if I'm around, I think I will be. In Minnesota, the consumption of ethanol in that state is 100 percent. It's mandated. They put \$26 million a year into subsidies in ethanol production every year in Minnesota. We're doing \$6 million and dropping it to \$5 million the last year. We produce more corn than Minnesota. Iowa, 42 percent of the fuel sold is ethanol blended. They have a complicated formula but they do subsidize it a little bit on the tax side. South Dakota, 41 percent of the fuel sold there is ethanol blended. They have a 2 cent tax credit at the pump. In Nebraska, I'm ashamed to say only 23 percent of the fuel sold is ethanol blended. I checked with my supplier who gets his fuel