

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

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LR 43

legislative business. LR 43, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, LR 43, a resolution originally introduced by Senator Dierks. (Read summary.) The resolution was introduced, Mr. President, and referred to the Agriculture Committee for public hearing. The resolution was reported back to the floor for further consideration by the full Legislature. I have no amendments at this time, Mr. President.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Dierks, you're recognized to open on the resolution.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the Legislature, LR 43, if adopted, would put the Nebraska Legislature on record in opposition to the proposed federal Environmental Protection Agency's draft implementation of new restrictions on aluminum phosphide fumigation, the last remaining fumigant for use in most raw grains. Let me explain the reasons. In 1998, Nebraska farmers produced over 1.2 billion bushels of corn, 165 million bushels of soybeans, 83 million bushels of wheat, and 56 million bushels of milo. Only a small percentage of these commodities can be consumed or marketed at harvesttime, which illustrates the need for grain storage, both on the farm and in commercial elevators. Along with grain storage comes quality concerns and insect problems. If conditioned properly, grain can be stored for long periods of time with no quality deterioration. As fumigants, aluminum and magnesium phosphides are important tools to help protect the quality of a wide range of agricultural products during storage, transportation, milling and processing. Under a risk mitigation measure proposed by the EPA, there is concern that the use of aluminum and magnesium phosphides will be overly restricted. The overall impact of the EPA's proposal may preclude the future use of the last remaining practical, safe and cost-effective fumigants available to U.S. farmers, grain handlers, shippers, exporters, millers and processors to protect the quality and value of U.S. agricultural products, processed products and finished products. LR 43 would put the Nebraska Legislature on record in opposition to the proposed restrictions on aluminum or magnesium phosphide fumigation and we'd be urging Congress to cease the implementation of further restrictions by the EPA, unless they are based upon the results of the completed