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houses weren't. There was a glut on the market. Well, I haven't paid considerably less for bacon over the last year, but our farmers sure got less. So a state meat inspection program I think would help our farmers to stay in the loop. It would allow them to add back the value that comes with keeping control of the commodity further down the food chain. You don't just sell the animal off the lot. You follow it through the processing, the packaging, the labeling, into the grocery store, and the farmer still has control of the income, and the farmer still has the benefit of the product. That, in its simplest form, I think is value-added agriculture. I know this year is a tight budget. This bill is written as a pilot program. It's not a full-fledged meat inspection program. In visiting with Nebraska's Department of Agriculture, they indicate that we would get federal cost sharing. The federal government currently agrees to pick up 50 percent of the cost of any state meat inspection program. And if Congress agrees to allow interstate shipping of state inspection meat, it is inspected the percentage the federal government contributes...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR ROBAK: ...to state meat inspection programs will go as high as 60 to 70 percent. The federal government would pay that part of the program. Boy, I'll have to turn my light back on again then I guess. Besides being value-added agriculture, this is...was that it? No? This is economic development for rural communities. If you look at the blue sheet, this is an e-mail that I received from Ken (sic--Kevin) Elfering, the director of Minnesota's program. They are the ones who started their program in 1998. You will notice the last paragraph he writes: I don't know all the reasons why, but our program pumped an additional \$6 million in the Minnesota economy in the past year. This is attributed to new plant construction, remodels, equipment sales and, of course, additional meat sales and production. We are not just talking about the producer. We could be talking about a group of producers who...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Time.

SENATOR ROBAK: ...work together as a co-op. Thank you.