

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

March 14, 2000 LB 1348

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature, let me say right off that I support the bill and I want to vote for the bill and I intend to vote for the bill. I have filed with the Clerk a series of amendments which are not at all intended to be harassing or in any way impeding to the bill but rather are designed, hopefully, for the most part to add technical clarifications, which I think will make the bill much more readable and much more clearer to those who must execute the law. And, secondly, to present to you a couple of philosophic choices which I think are important for you to consider and I wouldn't present them if I didn't think you should adopt them, but that...those are generally the tenor of the amendments that I will be offering. Also these were, I can't quite keep up with the bills this session as well as I used to in the past, and, of course, Senator Wehrbein has nobody but himself to blame for that because he is such a slave driver on the Appropriations Committee, and so it was just yesterday that I presented these amendments to Senator Wehrbein and I presented them to him with the statement that they were not presented quite early enough, and any of them that he wanted me to withdraw and reconsider on Select I would certainly be glad to do so. Having said that, let me just state quickly why I'm supporting the bill. I guess as I've looked at the variety of things that we can do to try to alleviate various economic situations, when you start out with the things that would be most effective with regard to the farm economy, as I see it, basically what you have to do is to restructure the economic relationships between the producers and those who purchase the grain and the cattle. But we all know that for a variety of economic reasons, we, generally, are not willing to do that, and for decades we have not been willing to do that. And so the basic overwhelming economic relationships have dictated the deterioration of the countryside and the continual pressure year end and year out, actually, on the producers which the buyers are able to effectuate because of their own consolidation and power, so we can't do anything about that. Another thing we can do, though, is to create alternative markets, so that the producers are not reliant upon only the buyers of grain and the buyers of cattle who are doing it for the purpose of food production. And for that reason, notwithstanding my good friend Senator Chambers, I think that the ethanol bill and the development of an ethanol market is, in fact, something that