

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

March 29, 2000 LB 1234

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...by octane to be ethanol enhanced. Ethanol right now, the ethanol mixture, is 89 octane, so that means you would have premium, ethanol at 89, unleaded regular at 87. Because unleaded is the lowest grade by octane and it has no ethanol mixture to bring it to 87, it cannot be sold in Nebraska. That's the situation right now. I'm going to have to turn on my light again.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Bruning, on the Jones amendment to the committee amendment.

SENATOR BRUNING: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I rise in opposition to the Jones amendment. When you look at what we did yesterday, we've essentially watered this bill down to the point we're exempting retailers with one or two tanks, exempts fourteen hundred retailers around the state out of the three or four thousand that are out there. We've basically taken half the people in the state who this affects, half the stations, the retailers that sell gasoline, out of this bill already. So the larger question I think we need to consider when we look at the Jones amendment and other amendments that are going to follow here is do we want to support corn markets, additional corn markets, in the state of Nebraska? So it's a broader question than getting down to whether this particular product is going to damage an engine and whether we have any basis for that. Ultimately, when you back up and you look at this thing, there's two arguments against it: one, ethanol is going to hurt my engine; two, I don't like mandates. With regard to one, we don't have...with regard to the first argument, we don't have any facts on the side that say that it damages engines, but we do have facts on the side that say it works fine. We have manuals and everything else that say this particular product, ethanol, is not going to damage your engine. With regard to the mandate, we've got...we've got occasion after occasion where the federal government and state government has told people what they're going to do and how they're going to do it. In some cases, that's what government is for, is to regulate business. Now, in general, I'm a free market guy, but I'm also somebody who understands that in this particular state agriculture is critical to our survival. And if we in Nebraska can't support our own farmers, can't support keeping the markets