

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

January 20, 2004 LB 479

an ethanol plant, again you're talking millions of dollars of credits. One of the most important, if not...I won't say the most important but a very important component of it is the actual building of the facility. It takes somewhere 12 to 18 months to build one of these facilities and, as I understand it, there is several hundred employees that are working on these facilities. And if you look in the committee amendment, and Senator Baker said we agreed to strike this but I'm not sure that I agreed to that. If you look in the committee amendment, it...

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: One minute.

SENATOR BOURNE: ...has language on page 9 starting in line 7 that in order to qualify for credits, you at least have to give Nebraska workers the opportunity to bid on these projects. I will tell you what's happening now, we have an ethanol manufacturer or producer or a plant builder, whatever you want to call them, that is from another state. He comes down and he helps with the financing. He helps with the planning, the permitting, all that stuff. Well, then he brings his own workers from a different state. So what we have is a lost opportunity for several hundred jobs for Nebraskans because we are bringing in workers from out of state. And further what happens is this individual and some of these ethanol plant manufacturers, they don't even give Nebraska workers the opportunity to bid on these contracts. There is no bid criteria. There is nothing in the law that says in order to qualify for this 20 or 30 million dollars that you have to give Nebraskans the opportunity to work on these plants. It doesn't say that. So, in my opinion, the only person that is getting wealthy off these is the builder of the plant.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: Time has expired. Thank you, Senator Bourne. Senator Connealy.

SENATOR CONNEALY: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members. I'm going to go back to a few of the points that have been brought up, on the raising of from 15 to 20 million and the raising from 5 to 8; that's a window for flexibility for the fund and it was just placed in the beginning of the bill because