

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

January 20, 2004 LB 479

from western Nebraska that travel around. They've built plants all over the country. Just so happens now they're building one in Nebraska and they're glad to be here. But we use a lot of Nebraska labor building state...or plants outside the state of Nebraska, so that, to me, is free enterprise. And I understand what Senator Bourne is saying and I've made crystal clear to the general contractor early on that we wanted to use as much Nebraska labor and...that we could, businesses, and they have. They've done a good job. There's just no room, in an eight-month process, to train somebody or have to back up and redo a particular process. Dealing with Senator Bourne's comments on labor also, Department of Revenue has told me time and again they do not want to be the judge and the jury on who gets these contracts. Senator Kremer was asked and pointed out this is a very sweet incentive program. It's \$22 million. For them to say, no, you didn't meet the guidelines of the bid letting and so on, and Department of Revenue has to make that ruling, it's going to end up in court. For \$22 million, it would be silly not to. Say somebody did not apparently qualify for something as labor, as contract, Department of Revenue doesn't want to get into that. It's also public notice to anybody who's building an ethanol plant, has to have public notice of an air quality construction permit hearing process and, believe me, these construction companies, when they see an ethanol air quality construction permit, they know it's a \$40 million project and they're going to bid on that thing if they have any chance at all of getting it. So there's plenty of public notice now. Some of Senator Beutler's questions and comments, I'm all for all the plants we can get built in Nebraska. It's tremendous economic development in rural areas. But if we let these six plants, and I believe Department of Revenue told me that they had modified four applications from, I don't know,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BAKER: ...20, 30 million dollar...or 20, 30 million gallon plants down to 100,000 in order to hopefully qualify with a portable still. There was four, and then there was two more applications brought in Friday for 100,000 gallon annual permits, Friday to Department of Revenue. So there's a total of