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FLOOR DEBATE

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to see that there...if there's any potential noxious weeds. It's much cheaper to take care of noxious weeds before they spread out over a large area and then cost a lot of money. It also authorizes the director to administer a competitive grant program to assist in encouraging the projects to the rest of these noxious weed programs. This competitive grant program was...is ingoing and outgoing. The counties could apply to the...to the director for grants in order to help control some potential noxious weeds or whatever the project might be. On the other side of it, the grant program is set up so that they can receive grants from federal...from the federal government, from the Environmental Trust Fund, from Game and Parks, or from any other gifts that they can...that they seem...deem necessary. We had a lot of support. The Environmental Trust Fund was supportive. It felt like that was in line with what their objectives are, from the Game and Parks. The federal program states that the states have to have something set up so they can receive these funds. I think they're anticipating maybe \$100 million to be disseminated out to the states, and we could be one of those that could participate in that. One of the weeds that is becoming a possibility of being an invasive weed is the salt cedar, which goes along the rivers. It uses...it uses a lot of water and spreads rapidly and it's hard to get at them. They're a lot of times at locations where they're...where they're a little hard to be controlled. So it would enable, before it became designated as a noxious weed, to try to control it when it's...when it's much easier to control. I think that basically is what the bill is. We do have committee amendments that changes a couple things. And with that, I'll close on this and open on the committee amendments if you'll...unless there's any questions.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Kremer. You've heard the opening on LB 869, offered by the Ag Committee and presented by Chairman of the committee, Senator Kremer. As stated by the Clerk, there are committee amendments. Senator Kremer, you're recognized to open on them.

SENATOR KREMER: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. There are basically two things in the amendments, and one is it's just harmonizing sections that enable the money to be