

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

March 10, 2004 LB 869

that one program. But here's what it says: The trust shall complement, complement, existing governmental and private efforts by encouraging and leveraging the use of private resources on environmental needs with the greatest potential impact on future environmental quality in Nebraska. So the first thing it sets out is that it's to complement. Now, when the board of the Environmental Trust was created, it internalized that tension. We wanted the directors of certain departments of state government to be on that board so that this citizen committee didn't get too wild and crazy and out there in terms of what it...in what projects it might approve. So the head of the Department of Agriculture, the head of Game and Parks, the head of the Natural Resources division, the head of Health, and Regulation and Licensure, and the head of Environmental Quality, all 5 of those are 5 of the 14 members on the board, and the idea was to provide some solid balance and base of knowledge there as to what the state itself was doing with regard to all the different aspects of the environment. So it was to get their expertise and maybe even to get their suggestions with regard to complementary programs, such as the Department of Agriculture is suggesting today. But to further illustrate that it was not designed to be a substitute for state programs, let me read to you the rating system and what's to be included and considered in their rating system in looking at competitive grants. Almost all of their money currently is given out through competitive grants, usually applied for by individuals or by political subdivisions of one type or another. The NRDs, for example, have been one of the...one of the great beneficiaries of the Environmental Trust money. But here is what it says: It shall include...the board shall establish criteria for determining the eligibility of projects for grant assistance. The criteria shall include the following: (a) the grants shall not provide direct assistance to regulatory programs. The grants shall not provide direct assistance to regulatory programs, or to implement actions mandated by regulations, except remediation. So it makes it quite clear that this is to be separate and apart from, complementing, not distance from, but complementing...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.