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SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Baker, would you yield?

SENATOR BAKER: Yes, I would.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Baker, so that my questioning will be attached to the answer you're going to give, how many ethanol plants are up and running right now and operating profitably?

SENATOR BAKER: Um, you're talking about total plants in Nebraska? I think nine, I believe, but...

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And how many of them are entitled right now to get credits or benefits of any kind from the state?

SENATOR BAKER: I can't answer that positively, Senator Chambers, but I think what you're getting at is there's two new plants qualifying under LB 536 that are currently operating.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Would they be among the nine that you mentioned?

SENATOR BAKER: Yes, they would.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay. Senator, do you think that ethanol as an industry will ever be able to stand on its own feet without federal or state subsidies?

SENATOR BAKER: I think right now, from what I understand, the price of ethanol is so high that they might be able to cash flow right now. I'm hedging my answer here. It's questionable to me, yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And if it weren't for those large plants, the large companies, those multinational corporations driving Congress to even consider federal subsidies to ethanol, do you think those subsidies would be forthcoming?

SENATOR BAKER: I doubt it.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: So ethanol is embroiled in politics one way or the other, whether we like it or not. Would you agree with