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FLOOR DEBATE

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on-line until 2005, they have...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BOURNE: ...they have lost time as it relates to getting credits. So I already think there is a disincentive in LB 536 for these plants that might come in and produce ethanol right on or around June 30 of this year. So what I'm saying is that we have to fund it, but I'm reluctant, given what I know, and it is a learning process, as I learn more and more about it, I am reluctant to limit it. I don't want to extend the deadline, but I also don't want to prohibit the maybe two or three more plants that will be built or could be built that will provide jobs for Nebraskans, both in building them and in running them once they're up. I think this is vital to our rural communities, and I'm really reluctant to clamp down on these plants that might be built.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Bourne. Further discussion? Senator Cunningham.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. Senator Bourne and Senator Connealy did a very good job of representing my views on this issue, and it is kind of nice to be on the same side, for once, as that slick lawyer. But anyway, I do support this amendment, AM2845. I do support that, but I do have some concerns with the committee amendments in the bills. And Senator Landis talked about the EPIC Fund, and currently we give these plants 18 cents a gallon. They could get up to 22.5 million gal...or \$22.5 million over an eight-year period. But what I would contend, and what I do contend, is that fund is paid for basically by the producer through the checkoff dollar. There is \$1.5 million a year that does go into the fund through the General Fund, but the bulk of it is paid by the farmers themselves. So I, as a pro-business senator, I support LB 775, I take heat all of the time because my constituents say, well, LB 775 only benefits Omaha and Lincoln, and I try to tell them it does benefit Omaha and Lincoln but it benefits some areas out in greater Nebraska also. But what benefits Omaha and Lincoln is also good for greater Nebraska. That's good for us. So now we have an ethanol plant who gets