

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

April 5, 2004

LB 1065

two, who have the federal government wrapped around their fingers because they give large political contributions; that is no basis for an unwise economic decision to be made in Nebraska. It's one thing to be sympathetic, as Senator Bourne is, for the farm economy. Ethanol is not going to bail it out. Ethanol is not an industry that can make it on its own, and it never will be able to. It was born in politics, it will remain a political issue. After the biggies have squeezed everything out of it that they can, they'll let it fall by the wayside and Nebraska, foolish, poor, silly Nebraska, will be left with all of these ethanol plants that are not profit-generating but will be draining money from the General Fund, from the EPIC Fund, from any fund, LB 775, wherever they can look and see a place where they can filch some funds. This bill is not in the best interest of the public. If a certain sector of the society wants to stake its future on ethanol, let it pay the freight. If the farmers, the rural economy, the rural sector, all of whom are to benefit so much from ethanol, want that, let them pay for it. One of the things that I think is very telling is the fact that, proportionately speaking, less ethanol is used in the rural areas than in the urban areas, and that probably is because they understand what a shabby product it is. Everywhere you turn around, you see problems of one kind or another. We know about the plant that is under criminal investigation. We know about the attempt to get all of these stills situated long enough with just enough production to plunder the treasury. But still there are efforts made to prop up this dying enterprise. When you add that to the State Fair, you see how skewed the Legislature's vision is this session. I don't have a whole lot of days...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...that I would have to fight this bill because we still have other matters pending, even though they've gotten off General File, some have gotten off Select File, but they are available. And I will not easily be run over while the gas tax is raised on the people that I am concerned about, in order to support a boondoggle for purveyors, investors and speculators, where ethanol is concerned. So I'm going to listen to what my colleagues say, and I hope that I hear some