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FLOOR DEBATE

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and as I got looking at the figures...I'd just like to read you a few figures that happened last year on E-10 gasoline sales. E-10 is a blend of 10 percent ethanol, 90 percent gas. And I...in 2002, there were 325 million gallons of E-10 gasoline sold. The average price of that gasoline was 2.1 cents below the unleaded gasoline price, which saved the motorists in Nebraska real close to \$7 million. Last year, in 2003, the sales of E-10 unleaded increased 12 percent, up to 365 million gallons. The difference in price was somewhat less than the 2.1, but still came to be about \$7 million savings to the state of Nebraska. Now just recently, we've seen many of the sales of E-10 gas about 3 cents less than the regular unleaded gas. If you figure the savings to us as motorists, and I'm one of the motorists, I have cars, pickups and trucks that use this, the savings is also good for the motorists. Also, it's good for the corn producer. They're willing to pay part of it. But the motorists, and I think Senator Stuthman mentioned, what do we know, what would gas prices be if we didn't at least even supply some of our own fuels, that we were relying on 100 percent on the OPEC countries. So we don't even know how to figure that, but maybe all of our gas is 2 cents cheaper than what it would be if we would not have the blend. I think we need to use more. I think we need to be more reliant on our ethanol. It's a home-grown product. It's good for our environment. It's just plus all the way around. It's also good for our communities. Probably the biggest fight to get an ethanol plant in the area is not the corn growers, it's the communities that need some...a boost. And what else can you think of as economic development, an industry that's going to come into maybe a little town of 1,000 or something like that, but an ethanol plant that provides jobs. It provides a tax base. I talked to one of the ethanol plants, that the tax base was going to increase the real estate property valuation, was going to add about \$22 million. And if you take that times \$1 which the schools get, you've got 200...and I think they said they were going to contribute about \$300,000 to the property tax. So for every time that we can contribute \$200,000 to the local effort, that means that much less coming back to the schools as state aid to schools. So I think it helps the whole state, it helps the communities, it helps the motorists, it helps the corn producers. So I think it's a plus all the way around and I think it's a good balance,