

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

April 5, 2004

LB 479, 1065

least one and perhaps two of our existing ethanol projects that are out there. It's a technical amendment that I think is agreed to by everyone. If you noticed, we haven't been talking about this amendment at all. We've been talking about ethanol. Now if that's the case, I think we all understand that the amendment needs to be done. Since my light is on, I'll tell you where I think things stand at the moment. I believe Senator Chambers has staked out and made public his position which is no money from gas tax, no motor vehicle fuels and, if you do, it's going to take 33 votes, a filibuster if we don't take the gas tax out. I think that's a fair characterization of Senator Chambers' position. Thank you. We have a number of supporters of ethanol projects who also, privately, and I don't think there's any reason why it has to be private, have said this: Look, the most important critical problem is this element that's in LB 479 up on Final Reading that says you got to be producing 15 million gallons by October if you're going to get LB 775 benefits. Take that out and we can support LB 1065. And you're going to need our support if you're going to overcome 33 votes anyway with Senator Chambers because of that, and if you don't have us, then LB 1065 won't go. And if you don't have us, LB 1065 is half of the solution of the problem because it's 45 million bucks. So we've got this two- or three-level situation, and by the way there are concerns that, for example, we have jobs that are related to Nebraska-based labor. Build the program...build the plants that are in the offing and they are...there is private commitment that those be done with union-based jobs out of Nebraska. There, in fact, I think is a signed agreement in one case. That's if one of these projects that we don't have a plan for, what we might be calling the...the "still project" ultimately succeeds and gets done. Here's what I've said to all parties. We now have a \$45 million problem on our hand that LB 1065 solves. Threatening that we're not going to do LB 1065 simply leaves us with a \$45 million problem on our hands. Don't want to do that. And I can understand why you do that but I...that's where it leaves us. The trade is if we get this \$45 million is that we take out a provision in LB 479 which might yield us ultimately someplace between \$60 million and \$100 million that would not have a funding resource. It's like that moment in Blazing Saddles where the sheriff holds a gun to his head and says, if you don't