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FLOOR DEBATE

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gallon fuel tax increase.

SENATOR KREMER: Thank you, Senator Baker. There are some that thought we should just not take that out. So if we were not able to get some new funding passed this year, that we would at least be made whole by the Highway Trust Fund. But it was ambiguous, as it was mentioned, and some felt like that would happen, some felt it would not. Even this one case said that it would. And I think it's good to clarify it, that we do not have some ambiguous language in here. One thing that I'd like to also mention that was mentioned, that the EPIC fund keeps...or I should say, the ethanol plants keep coming back and want more and more and more all the time. We have six of the older plants that are in production before these last four that have come under LB 536. All six of those have used up all of their incentive monies. They're not coming in asking for any more. They're operating on their own. The only funding that we're talking about is the four plants that have come in under LB 536. We're not coming back to fund any more from that. I believe that we've had a compromise that would not come out of gas tax. I think we've made a point that the motorists do benefit from the ethanol production. We...the whole state benefits, in that we're not reliant on OPEC oil all the time. And another thing I'd like to mention is that all we're trying to do right now in LB 1065...

SENATOR SCHIMEK: One minute.

SENATOR KREMER: ...is to get enough money to make it whole, make the EPIC fund whole for the four new plants. If these other plants, say we get five more coming in, we got to come back with some more money next year, and it's very likely that some more of that is going to come out of corn checkoff. I think it's very important that we do not take it all off the corn checkoff. It should be a partnership. The Corn Growers say that they're willing to step up, but others have to step up too. And as I mentioned before, historically, we've been funding with 50-50 General Funds. We're way down to where we're only 15...\$1,500,000 from the General Fund. And I think it's very appropriate that the motorists are able to share in this. We've already compromised that it would not go back to the