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February 24, 2005 LB 71

SENATOR STUHR: It seems to be a bit noisy.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Members, try to hold the...it down to a low roar, in respect for the speaker.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you.

SENATOR STUHR: Some projects and activities that the grants can be used for are found in Section 7 and include such areas as research, education and training development, technical assistance, feasibility and market studies, and others. The act will be managed as a joint venture between the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Agriculture, although DED will be the lead agency. The act is to sunset January 1, 2009. The original value-added agriculture grant program was successful and beneficial to our state. LB 71 builds on that success and experiences with the changes made in this proposal. I would like to thank Senator Kremer and the Ag Committee for all of their work and assistance on this bill, and I firmly believe that a healthy, prosperous rural Nebraska contributes to a stronger, brighter future for all Nebraskans. And I would be happy to answer any questions that you might have, and thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. You've heard the opening on LB 71. There are committee amendments, as stated. Senator Kremer, Chairman of the Ag Committee, you're recognized to open on those amendments to LB 71.

SENATOR KREMER: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members of the body. We do have committee amendments which make about four changes in the bill. First of all, it amends Section 5 of Section 9, which assigns the primary administrative responsibility to Department of Economic Development to avoid administrative inefficiency and lack of clear authority under the joint administration by the two agencies. Original bill had joint administration by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Economic Development. The amendment does retain the provisions of the original bill for collaboration between