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SENATOR CUDABACK: Time.

SENATOR PREISTER: ...pollutants. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Preister. Senator Schrock, followed by Senator Preister.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, the Natural Resources Committee heard this bill and passed it out. And I believe the vote was unanimous. Senator Preister, you're good at figures. You're very effective. Electricity is a very important source of energy for the state of Nebraska, and it's a very reasonably priced source of energy. And I hear your concerns about the emissions from the coal plants. I do not deny your figures are right. I didn't do any research on this, but I do know that certainly the larger facilities...and I've toured the one at Sutherland, the Gerald Gentleman plant. They've spent a lot of money on baghouses. They're very efficient. Matter of fact, their cost per unit is...they're the cheapest operating coal-fired plant in the nation. And I know they've spend a lot of money on their baghouses for clean air. To put it into perspective as to how much they're polluting the air in the state of Nebraska, I don't know. I can't do that. I do know we have clean air in the state of Nebraska. And thanks to people who are vigilant, like you, and hopefully I'm part of that, we'll keep it clean. But with the generation of electricity from coal-fired plant, there is going to be a certain amount of emissions. I will grant you that. We looked at this issue, and it seemed like the city of Grand Island, Hastings, and Fremont were paying an unfair proportion of the fees being paid for emissions. And so what we tried to do here was level the playing field. We heard testimony from the appropriate sources, and it just seemed like they were paying an inordinate amount compared to what OPPD and NPPD were paying on their coal-fired plants. And of course, whenever you increase the cost of doing business, with emission fees going to DEQ--and I'm not saying DEQ can't use the revenue, because they can--then that has to be paid back by the consumer. So we have implemented in this state an emissions fee to comply with the EPA regulations, and for...to offset...a fee to offset the amount that they emit. I think it's appropriate where we're at