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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 90

knew that there would be some resistance to the amendment, because I do know, as listening to Senator Wehrbein and Senator Stuhr, that there was an agreement worked out on LB 90. And they're reluctant to change directions and violate that agreement, and I appreciate that. But I don't believe that this violates an agreement that they made, particularly when Senator Connealy's amendment is adopted. Senator Connealy's amendment would be an additional...or, would be a reduction of money going into the EPIC Fund from what I propose, by about \$5 million. As I understand it, the checkoff is set to expire in 2010, so that's about \$5 million, a little bit more. You know, I don't know what to think. I think that we do need to fund this with...and I do want to point out that Senator Wehrbein's bill, assuming my amendment and/or Senator Connealy's amendment are not adopted to this, Senator Wehrbein's bill still leaves the EPIC Fund short by anywhere from \$13 million to \$18 million, depending on what kind of corn crop we have in the future. So, while I am absolutely convinced the state of Nebraska will honor its commitment to the EPIC Fund and to build those plants, I don't want to leave anybody with the impression that EPIC will not be funded, because I am convinced that it will be, what I am simply advocating is, let's address it today. Let's send a message that we will, today, properly, adequately fund, fully fund the EPIC, the fund from which incentives are derived, and then put in place a mechanism by which, if any of these five plants who qualified under LB 536 and who are trying to get built, let's put in an amendment, which is what mine does, that says, okay, we're not going to have to revisit this should seven plants or eight plants or nine plants come on line. It's going to be automatic. It seems to make sense to me. Do with Senator Connealy's amendment what you will. I do know there was an agreement that it would be one-eighth cent checkoff and no more. I think Senator Connealy's amendment honors that commitment that the rural senators made. And I wouldn't blame you a bit if you did vote for FA271. But I would urge you to give strong consideration to AM1631, even if Connealy's amendment is adopted. It keeps us from visiting this issue on a constant basis. It adequately funds the plants. It provides for flexibility should additional plants come on line. It makes sense. And I will tell you, from a rural person's perspective, I think you can make a great argument that this does protect the