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muster enough geographic support to move it forward, and there's still not a statewide effort. That concerns me a great deal. I appreciate Senator Connealy's efforts, Senator Bourne's efforts, and I want to support those as we move forward. Because we have opportunities here, and especially as gasoline prices are high right now, to capitalize on the value-added nature of a Nebraska product, so that we can enhance the Nebraska product and make it even more marketable, before other states capitalize on it and we basically lose out on that value-added nature of Nebraska agriculture products. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Smith. On with discussion. Senator Louden, followed by Senator Kremer and others.

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I will support Senator Bourne's amendment. I've been one that's always advocated corn checkoff to fund these ethanol plants as they were coming on line over the years, because there's some big corporations that are doing quite well with this ethanol incentive. Also, mostly in the corn country, where there's...where that's the major crop, why, it is quite a boon to that area. I don't particularly say that ethanol plants drive the price of corn; I'd rather think they probably follow the price of corn, by using up some of the corn that can't be sold otherwise. And they consequently are on the bottom, I would call them bottom-feeders, when it comes to buying corn. A lot of your other corn goes into your feeding operations and into other domestic purposes and export. I think that the reason we probably don't have ethanol plants out in the Panhandle area, first of all, we don't grow enough corn out there to stock one right. And until they start using wheat or some other type of grain for ethanol, we probably won't see that happen in the western end of the state. The irrigation and that sort of thing, why, I think the corn will be too expensive to use in ethanol. At the present time, they are developing corn that produces more ethanol in corn growing regions of Nebraska and Iowa. So I myself see those areas to be the primary ethanol producers of the area. Now, having said that, we are all...the entire state is reaping, now, some benefits of the ethanol. If you'll notice at your gas pumps, if it's done correctly, if...we