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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, and Senator Schrock, I'm going to vote for these appointments. But I don't want my favorable or affirmative vote to be misunderstood. I am opposed to ethanol in the way that it is being "boondoggled" in this state. I resent the way that a group of purveyors and speculators rushed in under the wire last session to oblige or obligate the state down the line to spend millions and millions of dollars for these purveyors and speculators, on a product which never has measured up to what it was represented to be by those speculators. There are two large multinational corporations which are the largest producers of this boondoggle, and they have been able to keep enough pressure on Congress to maintain an inordinately high subsidy for ethanol. Any subsidy, from my point of view, would be inappropriate. But if one were to be given, it should not be at the level which exists today. The state of Nebraska, being the tagalong, thoughtless, brain-dead entity that it is, as represented by its Legislature, went along with the notion of these subsidies. We could have taken a responsible position and made sure that future generations and those of us who will still be on the earth but not in this Legislature would not be saddled with debt that is totally unjustified. When people talk about needing a higher subsidy at some levels for ethanol because of the increased cost of fuel, they are acknowledging indirectly, and directly for those who pay attention, that the production of ethanol relies on petroleum-based fuel. There is a large demand for diesel fuel. Ethanol has never reached the point where it could be the fuel used to produce additional ethanol. Ethanol does not carry its weight. It never has carried its weight. It never will carry its weight. It's more of a political entity, product, scam, than anything else. If it were not for the federal subsidy, ethanol would have gone the way of the dodo bird, as it should have. Instead, dodos who are in politics continue to maintain it. The Legislature has created a board. People are appointed to that board. Obviously, they agree with what the board is supposed to do. But they did not create the board. So I am going to vote affirmatively for these two people, but I'm going to do everything I can to prevent this Legislature from giving away more money for this worthless venture. People may not realize it, but if you produced ethanol