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FLOOR DEBATE

March 2, 2006 LB 531, 856

recognized to close. Senator Beutler waives closing. The question before the body is, shall AM2515 be adopted? All those in favor vote yea; opposed, nay. Have all voted who wish? Please record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 35 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the adoption of Senator Beutler's amendment.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Next item, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Fischer would move to amend, AM2564. (Legislative Journal pages 852-853.)

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Senator Fischer.

SENATOR FISCHER: Mr. Lieutenant Governor and members of the body, what Senator Kremer and I would like to do with AM2564 is amend my original bill from last year, LB 531, into LB 856 this year. LB 531 was amended by the committee last year and they were rather simple amendments, but the premise of the bill deals with the animal identification system. It authorizes the Nebraska Department of Agriculture to develop and implement components of a national animal identification system and, more importantly, to provide for producer confidentiality when that system is implemented by the federal government, probably in 2009. It does not make the animal identification system mandatory. This is still a voluntary program here in Nebraska. I will go through part of what this amendment will do. First of all, in dealing with the original bill, it separates subsections (1) and (2), that are Section 1 of the introduced bill, into two sections. It expressly authorizes the premise registration and other functions associated with the national animal identification system to become Section 1, and provisions pertaining to confidentiality become Section 2. As I stated earlier, that producer confidentiality is very important to people involved in animal agriculture. It also provides that persons releasing information for any purpose other than those authorized is expressly subject to prosecution as official misconduct. It adds a new subsection to clarify that the confidentiality provisions are not construed to prohibit the department from discussing the progress and results of