

March 15, 1979

LB 190

cattle seeding industry is substantially gone to a corporate envelopment now, but the land we still substantially have in the hands of the farmers of the state. I am asking this Legislature to make a commitment to the family farm units today. Basically, it's a commitment that we do not desire the multi-nationals, the big corporations, to come in, and a commitment...we want the...we want the land owned and farmed by the people of the state. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, Mr. President and members of the Legislature, the Committee on Agriculture and Environment deliberately did not kill LB 190 in Committee, because the Committee felt that Senator Burrows earned the right to discuss the issue at least on the floor, and to have a fighting chance to get it to the floor with a bare majority of votes if he could muster the twenty-five votes. The Committee could have taken action, and I think you are all well aware of the fact that there were five votes in the Committee to kill the bill, so the Committee could have taken action to have done so and made it more difficult, because it would then have required thirty votes to raise the bill on the floor. But I think that I join the members of the Committee in respect for Senator Burrows' sincerity, and in respect for the many hours and years of work that he has put forth on this behalf, and I would want to say that the Committee has looked diligently at the various proposals that have been advanced this year and in previous years by Senator Burrows and other senators. The issues that are outlined by Senator Burrows are true...unfortunately true. The situation facing many farmers in rural America is a critical one. The situation is going to become more critical in future years. The issue that needs to be resolved, and needs to be resolved at some point in time, is does the limitation that is imposed on the kind of legislation proposed by Senator Burrows offer any honest solution to the problem. Now the question that I have asked repeatedly from persons who have come to my office and have visited my farm, is what will the passage of LB 190 do for American agriculture, or for the family farm? How will it improve my financial position? The answer is usually that it will stop the corporation, or the alien, from competing with me for the purchase of a farm. I want to point out that I have three sons, and I have seven daughters, and hopefully some of them will want to farm. I can tell you right now that for all practical purposes, the opportunity for those children to get into farming on their own is null and void...practically impossible. The reason is that the price of farm land has escalated so rapidly in the past five years, that very few farms today will return investment, will return on the investment