

May 9, 1979

LB 121

want to stipulate to this effect. The Appropriation Committee had a responsibility to advance 121 and if they did not like or did not feel that the provisions of 434 were being met by the committee that had applied for the grants to prove by this body there was nothing to prevent their introduction of a bill which would have been very specific, which would have perhaps met those objections which the committee had. The committee failed to do that. I believe the committee failed to meet its responsibility and I ask that the body advance LB 121 to the floor. Someone may ask, what can be done at this late date. I suggest to you that this body can do anything they want to do. There is sufficient time left in the session this year to act upon this request, advance the bill, amend it in whatever manner you wish it to be amended and pass it over to Governor Thone. I want to point out very specifically, that without the advancement of this bill there are no funds of any consequence that will be directed to the gasohol program. I want to call attention to this body that only yesterday the Omaha City Council, I believe introduced an ordinance that calls for the use of gasohol in city vehicles and I think that I would be remiss if I did not commend that council for that action. This body has taken no substantive step thus far to commit any funds to the development of gasohol notwithstanding the fact that the increased price of gasoline since we met January 1st will result in a cost to the taxpayers of this state of about \$200,000,000. When viewed in that context the money that I am asking for is a very minor amount. Also included in the bill is a \$30,000 request for the National Gasohol Commission. That request may be deemed to be excessive by members of the committee. Nonetheless, it does not, I believe, reflect the wishes of this body if we do not place some funds in support of the National Gasohol Commission. Nebraska has been the leader. Mr. Holly Hodge, of western Nebraska is the Chairman of the National Gasohol Commission. Senator Merz and myself serve on that commission. I will be in Washington next week to testify in support of Congressman Birkley Bedell's bill which will utilize the idea proposed by the Ag and Environment Committee several years ago relative to the utilization of the set aside acres to produce grain to be used for alcohol. I just really feel a little embarrassed that at this stage in the legislative session this Legislature has seen fit to debate many issues, has argued over many trivial matters but has done very little to address the energy issue. We can do it here. We can do it now. Mr. President and members, I ask that the bill be advanced.