

years we may have done irreparable damage to the economy and also to the future development of the State of Nebraska. So I urge your reconsideration. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Schmit, then Senator Labedz, then Senator Sieck. Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I don't know if I can say all I want to say in the allotted time or not, but I think it's very important that we review the history a little bit of where we came from, how we got here and where we want to go. I think perhaps as much as anyone I take some responsibility for the fact that Initiative 300 is in the Constitution. I'll tell you very frankly why, because for 12 years I have served as Chairman of the Ag and Environment Committee and almost annually we had introduced in that bill an anticorporate farm resolution. It is no secret that I have always opposed that kind of legislation. I felt strongly then and I continue to feel strongly that it was not necessary. But I would have to say that also because the Ag Committee killed that legislation regularly that the farm organizations, principally the Farmers Union, NFO, American Agriculture and some others decided to try to place it in the Constitution. Whether it was placed in there under false pretenses or not, no one knows. The facts are that they very successfully were able to get the signatures to place it in the Constitution and of course the votes on the ballot. I want to tell you also that sometimes, I'm going to bring out another point of view here, why the impetus developed that we needed anticorporate farm legislation. It's kind of interesting that now some of the people who are most outspoken against Initiative 300 were the ones who directly caused it to happen and let me tell you what happened. A number of years ago, six, seven, eight years ago, the press of this state became very concerned about what they called the rape of the Sandhills, the abuse of the land by individuals and by corporations. You could hardly pick up a newspaper on a weekly basis without seeing some exposé by the press of how a large corporation had moved into an area, had purchased land and was developing it much to the detriment of all of the rest of us if you were to believe the press. Let me point out what happened. There was a public reaction to that sort of development and on the floor of this Legislature we heard it spoken many times. Senator DeCamp and I said the economics will take care of the