

really don't know what difference it makes who you appoint to those positions, particularly the water management fund, when there is no money there. I live out in the country. I drive the roads a lot. I, more than most people, appreciate good roads. I support expenditures for roads and I think it is important. It is not my intention that we ever do anything to damage the road program. In fact this year we passed the bill, LB 346, which puts back into the...or takes away a drain of several million dollars annually on the road fund for the gasohol program. I did that because I recognize after 14 years the program is beginning to bear fruit, we probably do not need that subsidy for the alcohol program anymore. I would like to call your attention to the fact that we are spending between \$200 and \$300 million on roads a year to cover up soil. That is a very laudable goal. We are spending something less than two percent of that amount of money to conserve our soil and our water resources. I could cite you editorial after editorial about the importance of soil and water conservation. Ladies and gentlemen, it is like maintenance on the buildings of the Capitol, University and all the state buildings, it is something you can put off. You don't really see the need there and therefore you have a problem trying to fund it. I think that we need to recognize that we are either going to make a strong and a determined financial commitment to water resource development and to soil conservation as we have to those other important areas of government--education, welfare, social services, or else we ought to just quit fooling the people. We understand the realities of life in politics. But the people out in the country are beginning to be a little bit misled, I think, as to where we place soil and water conservation in the priority list. For many years, prior to my time, Senator Kremer tried and wrestled and was successful to a limited extent to secure funds for this very important project.

PRESIDENT: (Gavel.) Go ahead, Senator.

SENATOR SCHMIT: In recent years, because of budget constraints, because of inadequacy of income we have not met our responsibility in that area. We can do all sorts of things if we want to. We talk about how important agriculture is, but if the soil and water are allowed to continue to deteriorate, ladies and gentlemen, there will be no funds for concrete, oil mat, education or the poor or any one else. We talk about how we don't need agriculture