

indicated earlier, these amendments are a composite of the work of a great many people and a great many individuals, both inside and outside of the Legislature. You know that I did not support sending the bill to the Ag and Environment Committee. But I wanted to commend them for the work they have done. The results of their efforts are embodied in these amendments. I think that it demonstrates once again what has happened here in this instance can happen many more times in the future for the betterment of the State of Nebraska and that is cooperation rather than confrontation is much more likely to produce good legislation. I would like to ask you to advance the bill. I would like to ask Senator Johnson to make some comments, if he would, please.

PRESIDENT: Senator Johnson.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Mr. President, members, I think we've discussed this issue, especially this amendment, in good detail, although we have sort of bypassed the issue of financing. But that will be addressed, I'm sure, before too long. I don't want to talk this issue to death. But as I've said, and I think Senator Schmit has ably explained to you, it is a very important issue, one of the more important issues affecting agriculture in this legislative session and in many years to come. I think that we have tried the best we could with the forces that come to bear on us during the course of a session, both last year and this year, to address all the concerns from both the producers aspect and the environmental concerns of many of the conservation groups. Now not all of those opinions have ended up in this bill. But I think we have come as close to bringing the two sides together as we could this year and getting something passed. I would much rather have something to work with next year than to have nothing and to sit and fight among ourselves over absolutely minor details. But as I said, this is a tremendous opportunity to set a foundation and a course of action and cooperation, as Senator Schmit just recently stated, that will assist us in regulating the practice of chemigation which is a very efficient, effective way of applying chemicals by many farmers. It is going to be a practice that is going to continue throughout this decade and into the next. So I think for everyone involved it is important that we get a handle on this issue, get a handle on what is going on, who is doing it, where it is at, and taking steps to protect the ground water. I think that is exactly what LB 284 does.