

SENATOR RUPP: Well, the reason I asked the question, I hope one of the following speakers, perhaps Senator Vickers, would respond to this because I see a contradiction here and I don't want to make this an Initiative 300 debate, but of course food processing, the food industry is not exempted from Initiative 300 and I want to share with the body some testimony that we had on LR 16 in committee which I thought was excellent testimony by Mr. Terry McAuliffe of the Food Processing Center at UN-L and he said in essence, this. In interacting with the food industry, both instate and out of state companies, I've had input that certain of them have serious reservations about expanding operations or relocating operations here due to the existence of Initiative 300. Two major out of state processors have stated to me that I 300 is, in fact, preventing them from locating here. These two plants potentially represent several hundred jobs, provide alternate crop production opportunity for 100 Nebraska growers and tens of millions of dollars worth of investment.

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR RUPP: Senator Wesely said, I don't understand how I 300 stops the food processing industry and Mr. McAuliffe said, what is most important, Senator, is the red flag signal it sends up. You must understand our food processing industry is already highly fraught with government regulations by USDA, FDA, our state level Environmental Control and the state level Ag Department. When there is even one bit more of government regulation or limitation it implies to these locating plants that other states seem to offer a warmer reception. So I would like someone to respond to that because I think we have a contradiction here if we're going to expend several millions of state and federal tax dollars when, in fact, we have a barrier in place that might serve to nullify any of the actions in that area. I would like somebody to respond and explain that to me, how we can have one with the other still in place. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Vickers, then Senator Wesely.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President, members, I rise to support the bill, but I would like to take a few minutes to expand a little bit on where this money comes from, what we're going to do with it and what we expect from it, and I think the commitment that we're making down the road. I remember not