

would agree that in time those gas prices have to go back up. And I think this is a vehicle for us, in the State of Nebraska, to begin trying to break our line of dependance with other nations, other countries, for their gasoline supplies. It helps offset some of that. I think this is a good approach for the state to take. I know Senator Schmit has been wrangling with this issue for a long time, and has been trying to find a way in which to actually get this industry off the ground. I've talked to a lot of people who have been and still are very interested in the ethanol industry, and have indicated this is the best approach they've seen coming out of this Legislature in some time. I think it would be appropriate for this Legislature to advance the bill at this stage today. If you have questions, I'm certain that those of us who have been working on the bill, especially Senator Schmit and his staff, could probably provide the necessary expertise and information that you may want. But I would urge the committee amendments be adopted, which basically become the bill, and then have the bill advance.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Senator Schmit, on the committee amendments as amended now.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, I have no further comments. I believe that if there are no further lights on, Senator Harris will close.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Senator Harris, on the committee amendments as amended.

SENATOR HARRIS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I hope that you take some time either this afternoon or over the weekend to look at some of the material that I handed out. I would submit to you that the time to make this move is now while other folks are getting out of the production business. The number of wells being drilled has dropped dramatically. The U.S. crude oil reserves is dropping dramatically. We will become more dependent upon imported oil. We are going to have more of a surplus, as you can see by the handouts that I presented to you. It is the time to move. The time to move is not when the oil price is peaked out. The time to move is when there are folks that are getting out of the business when the demand is still there. So I would strongly urge you to support the amendments as amended, then move the bill on today. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Okay, the question is, shall the committee