

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members, for those of you that may be paying attention this late hour I just want to present my arguments for this amendment very quickly, and I've told Senator Peterson if this particular amendment jeopardizes his bill I certainly will pull it off the bill, but what it does is reinstates some funding for the predator control program that was cut last year in the budget. We've had a number of negotiations and deliberations with principally the Wool Growers Association which was one of the main recipients of the program. The amendment does basically three things. First of all it creates a user's fee that will fund the program about 37 percent. The other 63 percent will be funded by general funds. It creates a Cash Fund in the Department of Agriculture. It also allows the program to solicit funds from the checkoff boards. Many of the checkoff boards have been solicited by the predator or the animal control or Animal Damage Control Program for funding, but they said they don't have the authority or the ability to contribute funds to the program, so they have been sort of using that as a crutch to speak against giving any money to the program, so we're going to try and circumvent that problem. Basically, that's the gist of the bill. It just provides for a user's fee structure for those who utilize the Predator Control Program or the Animal Damage Control Program as it's now known. They would pay a certain fee for each animal that was killed or caught as well as some funding from the General Fund. I believe Senator Vickers has an A bill that will accomplish that feat, but if the amendment goes, fine, if it does not, that's fine as well. I don't want to jeopardize Senator Peterson's Apiary Program, but this was the best vehicle that we could find to reinstate some funding for the Animal Damage Control Program. I would move the amendment.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Hoagland.

SENATOR HOAGLAND: (Response inaudible.)

SPEAKER NICHOL: Okay, any further discussion on the Rod Johnson amendment? If not, the question is the adoption of the Rod Johnson amendment. Oh, oh. Senator Peterson, yes, on the Rod Johnson amendment.

SENATOR PETERSON: Mr. President and members, not just because it's my bill, but I did have some problems. Senator Rod Johnson came back and talked to me a while back and I said I didn't agree, that I didn't like it being tacked to my bill, but I see