

opportunity to close the argument.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, I will take my allotted time for closing. Senator Hoagland has said we are making a policy change here, we are not casting this in stone. Let me suggest to you that the amendments which we offered in 1119 did, in fact, reflect a policy change. That policy change reflected the work of the study committee, which I might add did receive input from the industry. And the study we conducted said, yes, there shall be and should be deregulation, but that it should be phased in because to do anything other would perhaps not be in the best interest of the consumer and of the industry. What we have done with LB 835, if it becomes law in my opinion, is not to have made a policy change. We have surrendered, we have totally surrendered the industry from a monopoly...from a regulated monopoly to an unregulated monopoly, unregulated, protected territory, totally, totally unfettered, totally unrestrained pricing. Ladies and gentlemen, that is a serious responsibility. Senator Hoagland has said, and I respect him for his convictions, that we can undo it next year. Ladies and gentlemen, this is not the normal kind of a bill which you can patch up, fix up, restore next year. You know I'm a farmer. From time to time I have found cattle in the corn field, an irrigated corn field. Well, ladies and gentlemen, let me tell you, you can get them out of the corn field, you can run them down, you can pen them up again, but you can never restore the corn field to its original condition. It always shows the ravages of 100 or 200 head of steers. And that is exactly what we are doing here. We are turning the steers into the corn field, and if we come back next January, you are not back to zero position. You are in a position of defense. Ladies and gentlemen, what happens here on this bill is not going to be lost, not only upon this industry, but other industries are going to take a note. They are going to say, well, it looks to me, it looks to me as if we do it this way. Convictions can be shoved aside, ideals can be shoved aside, the interest of the public can be shoved aside if we just put enough people on enough legislators to get the necessary votes. Because it is a complicated issue. It is an extremely complicated issue. And I suffer embarrassment because I do not have that 30 and 40 years of experience that many of the individuals in the industry, who have discussed it with me, have. Therefore, I'm not in a position to discuss with them many of the ramifications of what they have brought before this body and which they have discussed with each of you. But I've been around the horn enough times, ladies and gentlemen, to know that once you let the gate down,