

debate, I would like to call the senators' attention to the south balcony. Special guests of the Legislature today are 120 tenth and eleventh grade students from all over the State of Nebraska. They are participating in the Twentieth Citizenship Safety Seminar for the Nebraska Farm Bureau and are accompanied by their sponsors. Would you please all stand and be recognized. Welcome to the Chamber. Thank you. I will now recognize Senator Baack, followed by Senators Dierks, Bromm, Hohenstein, Coordsen and Elmer. Senator Baack.

SPEAKER BAACK: Yes, Madam President and colleagues, I rise in opposition to this amendment. Senator Beutler has laid out a scenario that has...that has kept us tied up on this issue for a number of years and that is the fact that we are going to try to...under his amendment, we would exclude the Department of Agriculture from this process, and I think the Department of Agriculture plays a very big role in this process. And he is saying that we are creating a sixth agency, a sixth overlapping agency to deal in this area. That's not true. We're not creating any agency whatsoever. We are...we are talking about using the available expertise that we have within all of the various departments in this state to come up with ways of regulating pesticides and other chemicals in this state and cooperatively all of those departments are going to have to cooperate when we write the state management plan. And as far as I'm concerned, the more of those departments that we have involved in that process when we're formulating that plan, the better chance we have of coming up with a plan that makes sense for the whole state and a plan that can pass our review here in the Legislature. We've got to have all of these interests involved in the process and I think that the Department of Ag being involved is extremely important. I know that it's extremely important to this legislation because I have been working on this legislation throughout the interim. It is an integral part of this legislation. Should we agree to Senator Beutler's amendment and say, okay, we're going to take the Department of Agriculture out of this process, I think we would be exactly where we were for the last eight years in this body with FIFRA and we would not probably adopt a FIFRA program for the state and we would simply not have that first step in the process of getting towards the state ground water management plan written because we would not have this step done. The state would not have assumed the responsibility for FIFRA. So I...I rise in opposition to this amendment. I think that the bill, as written, with the Department of Agriculture being the