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(Neb.)- Nebraska Lawmaker Pushes Loan Program For Counties



By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 02/12/2013 02:50 PM

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - A Nebraska lawmaker is pushing legislation to create an interest-free loan program for counties that the state has designated as "livestock friendly."

Sen. Ken Schilz of Ogallala presented the bill Tuesday to the Legislature's Agriculture Committee. Counties designated by the state as "livestock friendly" could borrow from the state at no cost to finance roads and bridges that are frequently used to haul livestock.

The bill has won support from prominent agriculture groups. But Sen. Ernie Chambers, who sits on the committee, called it an "iffy proposition" that establishes no way for the state to reclaim its money if a county fails to repay a loan.

Chambers says the bill would also divert money away from other priorities.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture has designated 21 counties as "livestock friendly."