

and water and it is their belief that LR 27 can help accomplish the goals I've outlined, namely, that waters held for use by agricultural water rights in this state are not available for the taking without proper legal procedures. And I would ask you all to help me bring LR 27 to the floor to be considered for passage at a later date. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Elmer. Discussion on the motion, Senator Schimek. Senator Morrissey.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members, I rise to oppose the motion to pull LR 27 from committee. LR 27 was authored by Central Public Power and Irrigation and was introduced, in my belief, to serve their special interests in relicensing dispute of Kingsley Dam. Within the power act, as Senator Owen Elmer has stated, there is a section which states that Federal Energy Commission must act consistently with a state water plan. LR 27 would declare our existing water laws to be Nebraska's state comprehensive water plan and our laws, in my opinion, are anything but comprehensive. Recently recognized shortcomings in our existing law includes, and we've talked about these since I've been here in Natural Resources Commission and really haven't done a lot about them, it's been they are tough to figure. Some of the shortcomings were a lack of recognition for the interrelationship between groundwater and surface water for conjunctive use. Going along with that is a resulting lack of protection for municipal supplies that rely on groundwater recharge. Also, a lack of regulations governing interstate water transfers, something that has hit in my district in the last couple of years where we are transporting water to Kansas from Nebraska and weak instream flow statutes that are definitely, in my opinion, in need of revision. The Platte River serves many interests besides the irrigators in hydropower including more than one-third of all the Nebraskans who rely on it for their drinking water. Because of these above stated shortcomings in our existing law, I believe LR 27 may allow Central to escape provisions for the protection of those interests. If they aren't addressed in law now when we say our present law is our water plan, I believe it could allow Central to do that. A true comprehensive plan must recognize these critical issues, as well as provide a blueprint for the future. It should start by identifying how much unappropriated water is left, then set our priorities, our state priorities, for the development and preservation of that water in the future. Anything less, such as what LR 27 proposes, would be