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FLOOR DEBATE

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customers, like ethanol plants, over 100,000 therms, are currently exempt from negotiation. This would retrain...we would need to retain current law. We'd need to write an amendment to that effect. Kansas probably has an overweening kind of regulation. They have a sort of a "mother-may-I" approach with respect to issuing dividends or getting loans. We would cut back on that idea. Both parties agreed that that needs to be done. There is a consumer protection program in Kansas that is probably overreaching and relatively expensive. We can get the same thing less expensively and yet still have consumer protection if we use the Wyoming model. Both parties are after finding the right balance on that idea. All parties recognize that from municipally-owned gas systems other than MUD, certificated areas would make sense. We'd need some language to do that. We don't now have it but we're prepared to find it. Both parties, all parties now acknowledge that there is a coming fight between MUD and Aquila, but the home for that would be another bill. LB 650 springs to mind. Lastly, we would need some language on rate building, so that we would find out what the standard was, whether it was just, reasonable, nondiscriminatory rates, terms, and conditions. And here we're committed to looking at surrounding states to find appropriate standards; also to define that set of powers that state regulators have like the power to lower rates, order refunds, issue civil or criminal penalties for noncompliance. In other words, the agenda for further negotiations is present and all parties are willing to sit down and do that. With that, they are prepared to move this amendment today with these things, the committee amendments and an amendment with respect to funding, which I will explain when time is ready. With that, Mr. Speaker, I will answer any questions you may have. I ask for the advancement of LB 790.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Landis. There are committee amendments. Senator Hartnett, to open on the committee amendments to LB 790.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Mr. President and members of the body, the committee amendments do four things. First, a new section is added which grants the Public Service Commission the full power, authority, and jurisdiction to supervise natural gas public