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LB 440

in the Appropriations Committee amendment, and then come back with the other amendment which will be available and take care of the technical part. So I oppose this amendment to the committee amendment because my position is let's just sunset it, get it over with this year. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Thompson. We're discussing the Beutler amendment to the committee amendments to LB 440. Senator Wehrbein, followed by Senator Mines and others.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Thank you, Mr. President, members. If you want to kind of follow the aid to municipality issue, it's on page 38 of your goldenrod book. But I want to comment, first of all, on MIRF. I'm going to support Senator Beutler's amendment, and part of it is we end the confusion that we did have in our...or misunderstanding originally I guess in our committee. I voted against MIRF back whenever it was, ten years ago or so, because I was concerned about another stream of funding for municipalities that in a way we have two streams of funding for municipalities. We have aid to cities and we have MIRF. And so what we run into in our committee was the fact that we were going to cut aid to cities one way or the other, and it ended up being either cut aid to cities as per page 38, or you can cut aid to MIRF, and that's what we're trying to straighten out here today. But the reason I end up supporting Senator Beutler's amendment is, philosophically, we have allowed cities to do what they're doing here; that is, bonding against this money. We passed a bill in April of 2000, or March or April, the Governor signed it in 2000, stating that they could. Any municipality may, by ordinance, issue bonds in one or more series for the construction or acquisition of an infrastructure project and so forth and so forth. And so we've allowed them to do it. That's what Lincoln has done. And so that's through 2009. So even though I disagree with it, we've allowed them to do it. We changed the law back in 2000 to allow them to bond against this MIRF stream, and so I'm reluctant now to break our word. It's like, to me, a lot of the statutes we pass over the years. You don't necessarily agree with it. Once that decision is made by the majority of this body, the Governor has signed it, that's the law and I think we have an obligation to do it, whether it's Appropriations Committee or others. We can't change the law as