

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

March 4, 2004

LB 916, 962

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...without amendment.

SENATOR CUDABACK: On with discussion of FA1523, Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, as you're well aware, the item that I've been spending most of my time talking about on this bill is the matter of financing, and the whole discussion of where money comes from when we have no money, and the whole question of the propriety of users paying part of this fee. And I wanted to bring one other item to your attention, which I think clearly shows that the Natural Resources Committee itself has in the past recognized, and currently recognizes, the propriety of agricultural users of agriculture as a regulated industry, the appropriateness of their paying a part of the regulatory cost. You will have before you, assuming you'll have much of anything before you, but a bill that's been prioritized is LB 916. LB 916 is entitled to change the livestock waste management provisions. And that bill does a number of different things, but one of the things that it does is to continue fees upon livestock producers and, as soon as I can find it here, I want to read to you the applicable provision with regard to user fees. Because it does set up for the livestock industry a fee system, and that fee system is based upon the number of animals that you have, and the type of animal that you have. And it says an annual fee shall be beef cattle, 10 cents; veal calves, 10 cents; dairy cows, 15 cents; swine larger than 55 pounds, \$4 per 100. In other words, and this came out of the committee unanimously, 8 to 0, so the committee itself has recognized the correctness of the principle; that is, that the regulated industry...that it is a better way of governing to have the regulated industry either pay the fees or at least pay part of the fees. This fee in LB 916 on livestock is not paying for all the regulation by any means. It's probably only paying for, maybe at best, 20 to 30 percent of the cost of regulation, but at least it's a beginning, it's an acknowledgement, and it's what we should be doing with this bill. And Senator Schrock says, well, we can't do it now. But, you know, that's what they said on this whole water regulation thing--we can't do it now--and they put it off for 12 or 13 years because a tight group of water users didn't