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FLOOR DEBATE

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to rip it out. The system is not working there. So to help us with the problem about this area, we had the traditional normal competitors come before the Urban Affairs Committee. Now it's been eight, ten months since we all went through this, lots of chances to think about it, lots of chances to come up with a way of improving it. MUD, the cities, and NMPP couldn't think of a thing. Ten months, couldn't think of a way to make the bill better, had only one position, which was nothing for the investor-owns. They came in and opposed it. And the investor-owns came in with a bill, and the investor-owns came in with a bill which essentially, virtually prohibited expansion of MUD in Sarpy County. It gave themselves and MUD natural growth of their systems, but then didn't...was silent for whether cities got natural growth. Their bill said that the only way that a customer could get their system changed was if they could prove that the natural gas company was incapable of providing the service. It wouldn't be enough that they prove that it was unsafe. It wouldn't be enough that they could prove that it was inadequate, but the customer had to prove that the gas company was incapable of providing service, whether they gave it or not, and the PSC had no discretion. It also did nothing to tell us about the problem of cities that could be growing. In other words, it served the interests of one side of the war. Here's what produces this conversation today with you. What's going to change? If we don't have a conversation like this in an appropriate bill, and LB 888 is not the appropriate bill at the moment because this is not germane, how is this going to get solved? Because next year you know what's going to happen, we're going to have a new Urban Affairs Chairman. We're not going to have Paul Hartnett. He'll be term limited out, and that new Chairman will start the gas wars learning curve all over again with the suits in the lobby telling him what to do just like they've been telling you in the last 12 hours. Aquila or the investor-owns will bring in a bill like they did this year, which was written essentially in their corporate headquarters, which gives them practically everything and MUD very little and the cities very little. It will be a one-sided bill. The existing bill was one-sided. And MUD and the cities will say, don't do anything. What's right about that? While we build facilities and then rip them out of the ground because we don't have a system for handling that yet, there is nothing