

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I would rise to oppose the Beutler amendment. I am not unsympathetic with the concerns that Senator Beutler has raised. I do believe that we are going to have to face in the near future the very large scale development in some parts of the state. I had a series of town hall meetings in western Nebraska a couple of weeks ago, and in some parts of the sandhills, some ranchers who a few years ago came in and screamed about land use and some other things were coming in this year saying, "We had better have the Legislature give us some protection and it should occur in the near future", but LB 56, in my opinion, is not a proper vehicle to accomplish that and I would oppose the Beutler amendment. I do think that the change that he is suggesting has a very large effect on the people of the State of Nebraska. It is one that those developers and those land users, land-owners should have the opportunity to comment upon at a public hearing and I would, therefore, urge you to reject his amendment. I would like to make a couple of points as to distinguish the industrial use which I am talking about and concerned about in LB 56 and the agricultural use which Senator Beutler is mentioning. Much of the industrial use that I am talking about is water that will be drawn from a well field and the wells, in many of these cases, will be located very close together. Those wells will have a very large cone of depression in a relatively small area and could very adversely affect other existing users in a very short period of time. If you are talking about fifteen or sixteen center pivots sprinkler systems, even if they were all grouped together, the distance would be between those wells considerably greater than would be the case in an industrial use and, therefore, the effect on other users would not be as substantial as would be the case with a very small well field located in a more concentrated area. Secondly, those center pivot sprinkler systems which put water back on the land, a great deal of that water eventually returns to that aquifer in recharge and that is not true in an industrial use when that water is consumptively used, when that water is evaporated in a cooling tower or that water is used in processing or whatever. And so there are some distinguishing features and some factors that distinguish industrial use from agricultural use that are important. Now I believe, and Senator Beutler knows that I am serious in believing that we need to address the ground water problems that he is concerned about and I will commit myself now to work with Senator Beutler and the members of the Public Works Committee on solutions to those problems but I do think it would be inappropriate for us to use LB 56 as a vehicle to accomplish that end. I have worked on this long and hard and I would appreciate it, Senator Beutler, if