

March 31, 1981

LB 56

was nothing but I think it is something significant. If we go ahead and say we are changing the whole system of water law now in one area, where does it take us in others? So while I do not support the amendment, I will advise you now that I am going to check thoroughly before 56 would come up for final with the view to talking to the Public Works Committee about studying the whole area over again, looking it over, so on and so forth, because what Senator Beutler said is just a little scary. We are doing things, I guess, I never dreamed of there.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Kahle.

SENATOR KAHLE: Mr. President and members, I oppose the Beutler amendment. I think what Senator DeCamp said just now has some bearing but I don't believe that we are trying to throttle the use of water for agriculture, at least not in a blanket bill across the State of Nebraska. I am sure that there...we have talked about a lot of legislation that has to do with the control of irrigation for agriculture. I guess if you wanted to make this bill retroactive, you would have a problem right here in the City of Lincoln with your drinking water because it is all pumped from wells in the Platte Valley and it tastes pretty good to me because it tastes like what I have at home, one of the few cities that has water that's drinkable. But I think this amendment is a sleeping giant as Senator DeCamp said and it could change the whole aspect of irrigation in Nebraska and I don't believe we are ready for that, not at least on a bill being returned from Final Reading for an amendment. If you want to go that direction, we certainly should have the right perhaps hearing, although we have had a lot of hearings on this issue already, but look at it in the right perspective because this could change the whole aspect of agriculture in the State of Nebraska if you really want to let it go as far as your mind would let it. At this time I certainly oppose the amendment. I think that LB 56 does help control some of the things that we are talking about in Nebraska. I know that there was supposed to be a power plant at Comstock which would use an enormous amount of water. I know that there was one out in Senator Cullan's area and so I feel that we need to start with this and, at least, have some idea how much water is going to be withdrawn when a large user is requesting the use of that water. So I oppose the Beutler amendment and support LB 56.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Vickers.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President and members, I rise to oppose the Beutler amendment, and as an individual that was interested