

SPEAKER MARVEL: Yes, sir.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President and members, I think it needs to be pointed out one more time that what we are doing is putting criteria, attempting to define a public benefit but putting the criteria in the statutes weighed heavily toward one side and I strenuously object. I think that if you are going to put in the criteria and I indicated on General File on this bill, I voted against a kill motion on this bill. I indicated at that time that I thought the criteria should be set by this Legislature but I cannot believe what this Legislature is doing. I cannot believe that we choose to ignore certain areas of the State of Nebraska that are experiencing severe declines. I cannot believe that we choose to ignore the thousands of dollars that we spend for studies and I have got three books up here. Here is one of them that just came out just recently. The title of it is "The Investigation of Our Official Recharge of Aquifers in Nebraska." And it was prepared in cooperation with the Old West Regional Commission, Nebraska Water Resources Center, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission. Some of the intent language on the inside, some of the language that deals with what this booklet talks about, some of the things that we are spending tax dollars on, we are studying, we are thinking about doing these things, parts of it says, "The experiments show that large quantities of water can recharge through wells and by surface spreading if conditions are favorable", and then it is talking about a recharged well that is installed out in the Aurora area, in Senator Kremer's area, in the large red area that you notice the map that is very close to the Platte River. The Big Blue basin comes within a few miles of the Platte River. As a matter of fact, this is Platte River water if I understand it correctly. It was pumped down into the ground as an experiment and it says the recharge rate was about 730 gallons per minute during two tests of six and eight months duration. It goes on to say that analysis of water level buildup on the recharge well during this six month test indicated the recharge could have continued at the rate of about 700 gallons per minute for several years. It further says, "Infiltration rates from surface spreading experiments", surface irrigation, if you will, "range from a half a foot per day in lowest covered plain to eleven feet per day in the sandhills". I guess what this Legislature is doing is saying, "We are just willing to writeoff the Upper Republican, the Little Blue and the Big Blue areas of this state that have got the declines", and any of you that have talked to any hydrologist will tell you that once declines start there is no way to stop them short of putting more water on the surface for artificial recharge. We have got several other booklets