

May 22, 1981

LB 412

make it far more attractive to speculators to hold this land and not provide any penalty of any significance, and for that reason I think it is contrary to the good intentions of this Legislature to try to make the Greenbelt Law one that applies to those people who are sincerely interested in agriculture. So with that in mind, I would urge this Legislature to adopt this amendment.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Well, Mr. President, I am tempted to use the argument of late date and some of the other arguments that have been successful on motions I have offered but what I would like to do is say two things only. Number one, the interest rate is not what affects the speculator. What affects the speculator is what land will qualify and I will tell you without any doubt in my mind that it is the other provisions of the bill that would attract the speculator, the fact that you can use land that has zoning potential or in fact a zoning classification, rather, that permits a different use. That is what attracts the speculator. That is the part that I have some reluctance with in LB 412 but I haven't fought that all that hard because I know Douglas County, as I said before, in my opinion is implementing the law incorrectly and I can appreciate because on some respects I am on Senator Newell's side in trying to prevent the misuse of the statute but the interest rate is not the one. That is not the thing that affects the speculator whatsoever. What I would suggest, and I did the other day, I would oppose bringing the bill back to take the interest rate off or change the provision, rather, because all that does is add to the cost of the eventual purchaser any way you cut it but I am perfectly willing to have the bill set until next session. As I mentioned the other day, the applications for these are May 1. That date is past. Perhaps there is some other route that can be found. The law is working satisfactory in Lancaster County. It is not a haven for speculators the way they are doing it here because the only land that qualifies is land that can only be used for agriculture. You cannot use it as they do in Douglas County on land that is zoned for some other purpose and that is how the law is intended to be used is only on land exclusively agriculture with no development possibility and a speculator isn't going to buy land that has no development speculative possibilities. So on that basis, I oppose the Newell amendment and I have no objection of the bill just being held over until next year and we can get on with some of the other legislation that is perhaps more urgent than this bill is.