

talking about only irrigated acres and taking away from the natural resource districts the ability to use an owned acres concept, we're going to be taking away from their powers, we're going to be taking away from the substance of what is in the present law. We would be moving another step backwards. The reason, there are a number of reasons why giving the local people control to use one of these two concepts is important but if you have thoughts about the sandhills, if you have questions about the sandhills, if you're wondering whether the people in the sandhills shouldn't be given some tools to deal with their own destiny, then you should be thinking very, very carefully about this amendment because if you take away from the sandhills NRDs the ability to use the owned acres concept, then you are essentially taking away from them one of the few, maybe the only means they have of distinguishing between ranchers and prudential on a large scale grain farmers and you are forcing them all into the same pot. For example, if you had an owned acres concept it would be possible for the rancher who only farms a portion of his property to have enough water for hay, for the grain for his cattle and to continue to live in the way of life he has lived in for decades and decades and at the same time have some controls over the large scale grain operations and the use of land and water by those types of entities. Because if you had an owned acres concept in a limited water situation, for example, it could end up that each unit of six hundred and forty acres would only have enough water for a hundred and sixty acres of grain farming. But if you take away that tool and you insist and insist that they use only an irrigated acres concept, then every time prudential wants to develop more land for grain cropping every additional irrigated acre they put on they get that much more water and there will no be means, no practical means to distinguish...

SENATOR CLARK: You have one minute left.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...between the rancher and prudential. So this is the kind of choice that you're making here. It is a very important choice and I think you should consider it very carefully. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, Senator Beutler said this is one of the most important amendments and I would certainly agree with him. This is probably the single reason above and beyond all else that water legislation failed last year, that we did