

March 11, 1982

LB 577

fairly good, but what we are talking about is the State of Nebraska essentially going into debt. It is the one thing that the state government in the State of Nebraska rarely does. We are prohibited by the Constitution of going into the red on our budget. It is a very rare thing for this state to go into any sort of debt whatsoever, but this proposal is essentially pushing the state toward the area of debt rather than a pay as you go concept in water development projects. I think that is the wrong direction to take. I think the other bills that are talking about upping the sales tax a half a percent or a full cent are up front with you as to what it is going to cost in water development. What LB 577 does, it is a sort of a very nice panacea type approach to this problem...well, we will worry about paying this back over the years. Let's get that money through revenue bonds and let's go into debt and let's build these projects and then we will pay it back over a period of time. Well, that sounds wonderful, but I don't think that is what the State of Nebraska was built on. I think we built this state on the concept of pay as you go, be up front whether it be highway projects, whether it be the Capitol Building, it is a pay as you go concept pretty much with a few exceptions, of course. But let's talk about this Capitol Building, we have eulogized and talked and praised about the Capitol Building the way it was built. One year at a time we gave one million dollars. When that money ran out, the project stopped for the next year when more money was allocated, and then in a ten year period we built this Capitol Building, and we are proud of it. We didn't go into debt. We are still not paying off the Capitol Building as many states may be. Instead, we did it as we went. We paid for it as we developed and I think that is the same thing on water projects. Now is that to say that what Senator Koch is proposing is absolutely wrong? No, I don't think so. But let's talk about it a little bit. Let's talk about whether or not we want to put the State of Nebraska into debt through these bonds to pay for these projects. Let's talk about the alternatives that are presented in bills held in committee at this point in the Public Works Committee. Let's talk about those approaches versus this approach and are there better alternatives that could be done to deal with the same sort of issues Senator Koch is trying to address? Certainly the goal of water development projects is something that we can all agree to. I personally think that we should be able to develop a number of smaller projects across the State of Nebraska to retain our water where it falls and do a better job of managing our water supply. No doubt in my mind we can do that but the cost is extreme and we have dealt with this issue time and again. This Legislature in efforts

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