

March 11, 1982

LB 577

let's consider it carefully before we advance it any further in the legislative process.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Vickers.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President and members, as a member of the Constitutional Revision Committee that heard this bill and advanced it to the floor, I certainly support LB 577. I support the concept and I support the idea that this state has to make more of a commitment to water storage projects within this state. Now I think I understand the position that Senator Wesely is coming from, but I am a little bit surprised as a member of this body that served on the Public Works Committee for the length of time that Senator Wesely has that he would take this position. I am also a little bit surprised that people that have supported the idea of revenue bonds for just about everything under the sun would suddenly be opposed to them for such a worthwhile project that benefits everybody in the State of Nebraska practically. As many of you know, I have opposed the use of tax exempt revenue bonds to finance and support various things that private industry could also do that I felt put the State of Nebraska or put the government in competition with private industry. But I think we all recognize that private industry is not going to develop the water and the water projects in the State of Nebraska that probably need to be developed. Now I would suggest to you that you note the language of the bill that indicates that the repayment of these bonds is going to be closely related to the use of such structures. Now recognizing that this is a constitutional amendment we are talking about and that would take legislative action following that constitutional amendment's adoption to enact it in the statutes, it seems to me what that is saying is that it is going to be paid by the people that are using the water from those projects. As Senator Wesely was talking about raising the sales tax and various other things, I don't think that is true. That is not the way I read this amendment. I don't think that is the intention of the introducer, and I certainly don't want to speak for the introducer, but I think the intention is that those of us whether it be through groundwater recharge, whether it be through irrigation, whether it be for minimum stream flow, or whatever the purpose may be, that benefit from water storage in this state would be asked to contribute to the repayment of those bonds to pay for that storage. And I think that is appropriate. I think it is appropriate that the state take this action, and I certainly oppose Senator Wesely in his motion to kill LB 577.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Howard Peterson.

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