

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...get the reports of an institutional critic, a consultant, who reviews the natural gas industry's requests for greater rates. And this last year in the far west, this mechanism has led to a challenge by the gas companies when the far western cities, acting in reliance on their consultant, denied some of the increases requested by KN. The amount of rate difference that KN wanted and got was roughly a million dollars a year. That case went to our Lancaster County District Court and the court supported the cities and did not support the utilities. The mechanism, in other words, meant about a million dollars of rate relief for those far western payers a year. I do not have a contrary example of strong, effective rate regulation in the Public Service Commission...

SPEAKER BARRETT: Time has expired.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...that compares.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Hartnett.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I think Senator Landis did a good job of explaining. What we've done in this state, I guess, through our regulation is we have given control of natural gas through the cities, to our cities, and we kind of put it in concrete a couple years ago when we passed LB 663 which was Senator Korshoj's priority bill a couple years ago and we simply...this is what we're doing with this here. It is allowing the City of Lincoln, and this just deals with the City of Lincoln, to have control and that is where it has been with our historical context within this state. It might be different than in other states and we're probably a public utilities...Public Service Commission, and other states might control it but in this state we've left it up to the cities to regulate natural gas rates within their boundaries, and so with that, I simply would ask the body to advance this bill. What it will mean I think in the long run, it will mean cheaper rates for the people that live in the City of Lincoln because there will be some competition, they will have two pipelines rather than one. So with that, I would ask the body to advance the bill unless there is other questions.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Any further discussion? Senator Landis, any closing?