

the EPA officials, my staff and I sat down with a number of farm organizations in this state to try and draft the bill the way that they felt would be fair to them and we thought we had something worked out, but of course, that has not quite come about because I know that there is some groups that still have questions about the cost and whether we will be able to control our own destiny under this program. Obviously, I want to make sure that if we're going to frame a statewide management plan for groundwater quality, that Nebraska be the controlling force in setting our own destiny rather than someone from Kansas City or Washington, D.C., but as Senator Schmit has indicated, institutional memory sometimes is a good thing and he was here along with I think Senator Chambers and Senator Warner when the first discussion back in 1974 took place on the FIFRA issue. And so I've listened to some of his comments, I've listened to other comments by other senators here today and as I said, maybe today's discussion all that's going to come out of this is the discussion of teaching us how important groundwater is to the, not only just the quality, but the quantity of water in Nebraska to our citizens which primarily derive their drinking water from the groundwater in this state, and if it's polluted, if it's contaminated, then it's our own fault, so I think the important thing...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: ...is sooner or later this state is going to have to recognize that we're going to have to implement some plans to protect the groundwater. LB 1099, which could be discussed later this session, possibly could be that vehicle or this bill as well, but I've tried to work with some of the other groups to make sure that there is support for the whole plan and not just part of it and, as I said, if the bill doesn't go this morning, I'm going to be disappointed, but I'm not giving up. I think that I've tried to work with Senator Schmit over the interim period to come up with a plan that would help get Nebraska more involved in protecting our groundwater quality. The discussion largely has centered on the bill even though we're still on the committee amendments. Whether you support or oppose the bill I don't think the committee amendments are bad. I think they simply put the bill in a shape that in case it would advance this morning, that it hopefully would make some sense.

SPEAKER BARRETT: The Chair recognizes Senator Schmit, followed