

If there is a special contamination problem 50 miles from the City of Lincoln, under the new committee rule, most of that would be paid by the City of Lincoln instead of, under the current rule, part of it being paid by the City of Lincoln under the general NRD levy and part of it being paid by a special levy on those lands that are within the contaminated area. The burden on Omaha and Douglas County is even greater because even a greater portion of their NRD funds come from the city. There was a compromise in the past when these districts were set up which said part of it will come from the people who paid...who caused the problem and part of it will come from people who live in the general area, in the NRD, and that was fair, in my opinion. But now we're using an isolated situation where there has been no evidence that the general levy would not help solve the problem and where there has been no evidence that the City of Beatrice was part of the problem, we're using this little example to change a broad area of policy which is wrong, which is wrong. If we're going to clean up the groundwater contamination problem, we have to have help from the general taxpayer and from the districtwide NRD people, everybody who lives in the NRD, but, but we have to put pressure on the people who are using the fertilizers and are using the problems...the problem causing applications, we have to put pressure on them to do something too. They have to have incentives, economic incentives to stop this business, and if you pass this bill, you're lessening those...the committee amendments, you're lessening those incentives and you're putting a greater burden on the urban areas to clean up problems they had nothing to do with. In the urban areas, we have our problems and I believe philosophically that the companies who cause those problems and the urban taxpayers should and will be paying a greater share of cleaning up those problems than the rural taxpayers will, and that's the way it should be. What my amendment would do is say that we will continue to tax the special areas the two cents, plus we will give them authority to tax in those special areas an additional penny if they need more money. So it will increase the ability to tax, not the tax, but the ability to tax from two cents to three cents within the special protection area and it will leave in place the ability of the NRD district to contribute additional funds to cleaning up that special protection area so that we retain the old system, the old compromise. but enhance the power to tax for purposes of the special protection area within the special protection area and we will not do away with the compromise that was decided upon years ago in how we would handle the funding of these cleanups.