

up some groundwater.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Rod Johnson. We'll now proceed to Senator Coordsen.

SENATOR COORDSEN: It's now on, yes, I hear an echo. I, too, rise to oppose the Beutler amendment. You know, my esteemed colleague is generally right when he rises to amend a bill. But none of us, I guess, bat 100 percent. In this particular case, we are, I believe, with LB 21 as amended, and by the way I do support the committee amendments, providing a significant advancement in the funding of special protection areas which, by the way, are talked about in several instances, only being put in place on a test basis in one area in the State of Nebraska, and that does not happen to be in the Lower Big Blue, by the way. Senator Beutler is well intended. But, at the time that SPAs were put in the statute, and there was somewhat of an afterthought of what are we going to do to pay for them, funding put in, you will remember that the total levy for NRDs was also much lower. Several years ago we took significant steps to enhance the taxing capability of NRDs across Nebraska in raising the maximum amount, which is now 4.5 cents. It was not that way at the time of the original 2 cents. I would like to walk you through, for just a little bit, how this would impact the only SPA that is currently being put into place in the State of Nebraska. This is a co-op between the Lower Republican NRD and the Little Blue. It encompasses an area, the City of Superior and parts of the Republican Valley to the southeast of Superior, right up against the Nebraska-Kansas border. The area within the special protection area, there's 12 sections in Nebraska with a \$6 million valuation, 20 sections in the Lower Republican Area in Nebraska, since it includes the City of Superior, has a \$41.5 million valuation. The 2-cent levy gives you an opportunity to levy a total of \$9,500 in that particular special protection area. You contrast that with the opportunity for funding which exists under the committee amendments, should they be adopted, and you will find that although both of these NRDs are well below their 4.5 cent limit, Little Blue is currently at 3.25 cents, and Lower Republican at 3.15 cents. The half cent levy would raise, across both of these districts, since it's a co-op project, \$138,590 compared to 9,500. You add to that their current funding that they could have under the 4.5 percent limit, and you have a total available increased funding in this one SPA alone of \$494,590 of available funding to pay the costs of this project, compared to 9,500 under the 2 cents. Now, what