

SPEAKER BAACK: The house is under call. All members please report to the Chamber and record your presence. The house is under call. The house is under call. All members, please report to the Chamber. Senator Moore, would you record your presence, please. Senator Robinson, would you return to your seat, please. Senator Pirsch, would you please check in. Senator Schimek, did you authorize call ins? Call in votes are authorized.

CLERK: Senator Wesely voting yes. Senator Robak voting yes. Senator Beyer voting yes.

SPEAKER BAACK: Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 3 nays, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BAACK: LB 368 advances. We'll now proceed to LB 51, introduced by Senator Schmit. The call is raised.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 51, introduced by Senator Schmit. (Read title.) Introduced on January 10, referred to Natural Resources, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill, Mr. President.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, members, the Natural Resource Districts were established more than 20 years ago. The principal concern with the Legislature and the individuals who promoted the concept, and Senator Kremer and Burbach and Kokes and those who were strong supporters of the idea was that we protect the quantity of water that we had in Nebraska, and that we guard against unusual declines and waste and other kinds of aberrations. Since that time, we have seen an increased amount of interest in guarding the quality of the water as well as the quantity. Recent droughts around the country have called attention again to the fact that we need also to be concerned with protecting the quantity of water, and I intend to address that in another bill at some other time. But the facts are that we are, as individual citizens, very dependent upon a high quality water system which has benefitted this state, both underground and surface, for our very sustenance. This bill allows the natural resource districts to establish a goal for the maintenance of quality, as well as the quantity of water in groundwater reservoirs. It also allows the NRDs to determine the actions that are necessary to stabilize or reduce the level or to increase or spread the...to reduce the level or to