

SENATOR HORGAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Would Senator Schmit yield to a question, please?

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Schmit, would you respond?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Yes, I will.

SENATOR HORGAN: Senator, I'm interested in what effect the elimination of the Water Board will have on your bill, LB 697, on the Prairie Bend project.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Really nothing.

SENATOR HORGAN: But doesn't 697 ask the Water Board to oversee that project and to take \$200,000 and to administer those funds?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, I don't think so. I think it changed that...I have, under the Prairie Bend project, I'm not sure which bill it is, I asked the...the Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee to take over that responsibility, along with those responsibilities under LB 212. And if, in fact, Senator, I ever had any hopes of there being money available for that project, I would not be disbanding the Water Management Board. I had a little bill here this morning on the Prairie Bend project. It was unceremoniously dumped from the consent file and I think that indicates a little bit of the problem I have with Prairie Bend. I still have hopes for it but we can...the Prairie Bend project is a long way away, Senator, at the very best, and we can certainly handle it without the Water Management Board.

SENATOR HORGAN: Senator Schmit, just one more question. As I recall talking about the Prairie Bend project and the fiscal impact of LB 697, one of the comments made was that the Water Review Board could do that study and if we eliminate the board, isn't that going to eliminate their ability to do any study on Prairie Bend or any other project?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, Senator, we still have water resources, we have the commission, we have many capable people. In fact, we have all of those people anyway. We're not eliminating any jobs with this, we're just eliminating the board as it stands today.