

eminent domain in the state or its agencies. Does that mean that the...that eminent domain will be used in obtaining these abandoned rights-of-way? I don't know if that's what it means, but to me that's what it sounds like. I don't think that should be in there. I think there's enough things wrong with the bill that we should indefinitely postpone it.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Lamb. Senator Beutler, you're next.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, there have been several innuendos made with regard to how trails function and how they work which simply have no basis in fact. There have been allegations that people on trails somehow create problems for the rural landowners along the trails. And at the same time that that is being said, you may notice that not one lick of evidence of that has been cited from any existing trail, from any of those 3,000 some miles of existing trails in the country. And the reason that there has been no evidence suggested is that because, by and large, the huge preponderance of the evidence is that the urban people and the other people, rural people who use those trails behave themselves very well, and that there are almost no problems caused by trail users to adjoining landowners, and that the state agencies and the people who run these trails are extremely sensitive to and respond very quickly to any potential problems, whether it relates to easements, or to right-of-ways, traditionally easements going across these trails that exist with the railroad, have been allowed to continue to exist. Fences have been well maintained, farm values, actually property values along these trails, depending on where they are, can even go up rather than going down, which is the concern. All things taken together, the evidence, from what's been happening across the country, is that these trails do not cause problems in rural areas and, in fact, are very...are very good for some rural areas, both in economic terms, and in creating a good relationship between the city and the country. I want to point out to you again some of the economic advantages, and by the way, let me hit the eminent domain question quickly, because I know that's a hot spot with a lot of people. This bill doesn't do anything to extend to anybody any additional rights as far as eminent domain is concerned, that's a complete red herring. In fact, the statement in the bill is to make...was designed to make clear to you that eminent domain wasn't being granted to anybody that did not already have that power. So eminent domain is not an issue