

the Beutler amendment, I do not know how you can offer a vote on this one particular public use project and not offer the same vote on any other public use project in the future, whether it's moving the site someplace else or on any other project, the building of another state penitentiary, for example, since we know that prison overcrowding is becoming a significant problem in Nebraska, and there is probably going to be a need at some point to build another prison somewhere in the state. Do we not provide the same vote to those people who must live around that facility? So I guess from a public policy standpoint, you have to ask yourself whether you feel that that's the right way to go. If you do, then I suggest you vote for 72. But I'm only asking you to look at the technical side of this project, whether or not it can be safely built, safely operated, safely run by the contractor with the supervision and oversight of our Department of Environmental Control and other agencies that are required to participate in being the supervisors of this project. One point I would like to make, as I said, I support building this facility on its technical merits, not on a popular vote. If, for some reason, the site selection in Boyd County fails for technical reasons, then I think we could go back to the compact and say, look folks, we have done everything possible to follow the law. We have negotiated, we have worked in good faith and we have found what we thought was the best, most suitable site in Nebraska and it failed our standards to license. And, at that point, I would like...

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: ...the compact to take a very serious look at removing this facility out of Nebraska and going to another state. We have done everything in good faith. We have met the milestones. We are further ahead than any other state and if it fails on its technical...on its site characterization, then I say we have fulfilled our responsibility. But if...there is a two-edged sword here, if the site characterization comes back and they say we can safely build and run a facility in this site, then I think we should go ahead with the project here in Nebraska. But I just, from a public policy standpoint, from a technical side, I think that we have to recognize that, by passing 72, we jeopardize not just this one project but we start down the path of jeopardizing every public use project with a popular vote. That is the reasons I am not supporting LB 72.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Johnson. Senator Horgan,