

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Lamb, I think I'll go to you first and would you like to explain the bill and then we'll go to the amendments.

SENATOR LAMB: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, you will remember that this bill has been before you twice before. The first time the bill was before you was to raise it from committee where it had been killed by the committee. And the second time it was on General File and it failed to advance by one vote. It got 24 votes on a day when there was a high absenteeism rate in the Legislature. So now we're back on General File with LB 511 and I hope that you will vote for it today. This bill as amended by my amendment the last time it was up and that amendment was designed to give more statewide control over these protected rivers. The amendment says that the Natural Resources Commission first makes a designation and then the counties follow up with the actual zoning that would occur in that stretch of the river. This is a combination of state and local control which I find to be proper in protecting our resources. There have been people who say it should be completely state control and I don't believe that. I believe there should be local control involved as well as some input by the state. Now there has been some comment about the fact that the scenic river bill concerning the Niobrara passed yesterday in Congress and previously had passed in the Senate and would be now on its way to the President, and most people think that the President will sign that bill. But as I stated before, this is not a Niobrara bill. LB 511 is not a Niobrara River bill. This is a statewide bill which has to do with every stream in the State of Nebraska. It sets up a system whereby control over the activities along that river can be monitored, can be controlled by government. That is what it is designed to do. That's what it will do. So those of you who may be confused by the vote yesterday in Congress regarding the scenic river for the Niobrara don't need to be because these are two separate issues. There are, of course, many, many other streams in the state to which this bill would apply whereas the federal bill applies only to about 76 miles of the Niobrara River. So if you're concerned about the effect that this bill will have on the passage of the scenic river bill in Congress, you can relax because it has already passed and so you should not be afraid to pass this bill because of its possible effect on the federal bill. With that, Mr. Speaker, I would just ask that after we consider the amendments that the bill be advanced.