

would emphasize our commitment to groundwater. Is it real or not? I think it should be. I think we all mean it when we say that we just don't look at it and see that we don't...haven't put any money into that in fact...to that effort in the past. I believe the commitment should be real and it can't be...the reality is it can't be as strong as we'd like to do it right now, but we can get started. We can either get started or we can continue to put it off...put it off and put it off, like we have in the past, like we have on many problems in the past. The thing about that is these problems don't get better if you ignore them. They do not go away. They are very real, the federal mandates are very real, and we better learn how to adjust and pay for them. Now again, we can say we don't want to raise taxes, and I don't want to, and that's why I've been discussing more money on the state level so we don't have to raise property taxes. Because the less amount of money, the smaller amount of money you put in on the state level, the more your local property taxes are going to go up to support these programs. Again, not nice programs, good programs, these are mandated programs. Water quality. Clean Drinking Water Act...or the Safe Drinking Water Act, mandated by Congress. We don't have a choice. We have a choice on how we pay for them. We can make each and every citizen pay and if they're in a 25 person water system, they can pay up to \$160 per family member for the testing that's mandated. If you look at some of the other parts of the bill, it provides training and assistance for training and it limits one NRD to 10 percent per fiscal year of the money distributed. There are some safeguards in here. And I think, quite honestly, that the NRDs have been leaders in this area. They've been back year after year in the Natural Resources Committee asking for the authority and ability...the ability to be out there testing and protecting our water, closing our wells, registering our new wells, and setting up the documentation and the facts and figures that are needed to show what we have out there. Because, quite frankly, we don't really know. We do not really know. There are so many abandoned wells out there that are direct conduits to the water system, the easiest method for pollution you could ask for, and it's been the NRDs that have been out there trying to justify that situation...rectify that situation, register the wells, get them capped, get them closed, find out what we have going on with our underground water. You look at this, you look at the bills the Sierra Club are...are asking about...look...bringing. Look at the bill the Governor is bringing. They're all...the goal is all the same. And right here we have a vehicle that might need