

This is a new aspect of this bill and has serious consequences and could spend large sums of state money in implementing this and the water management plan part has not had a public hearing. If this stays and it's included, I should...I would suggest, since we still have time to publish and still have time to have a hearing in the Agriculture Committee, that we would resubmit it to that committee for a rehearing and have the EPA come in and explain all of the threats that have been made as far as withdrawing chemicals and discuss the consequences and the costs involved with this groundwater management plan that does not belong in the chemical bill. And, for that reason, I would oppose this amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I would like to support the amendment, not particularly enthusiastically because it doesn't go as far as I think we should go in terms of restoring a kind of unified power to the Department of Environmental Control on these matters. But, at least, it's a compromise and, at least, it's a compromise at a junction or at a juncture or at a division line that makes a great deal of sense. What Senator Rogers is doing with this amendment is not turning over everything to DEC, by any means. Almost all of the regulatory power under this bill is being retained by the Department of Agriculture, even with his amendment. But what is being divided out is this groundwater plan that is apparently required as part of the federal push. And the reason that that's being divided out and say, okay, DEC, you take the lead on that aspect of it, is simply because in the regulatory structure that we've heretofore put in place in this state we have operated through the conjunctive use of the Department of Environmental Control working with and through the NRDS on all things related to groundwater quality and groundwater quantity. And so what Senator Rogers is saying, insofar as this FIFRA act deals with a groundwater management program, take that part of it, shift it over, give it to DEC and let DEC continue to work in conjunction with the NRDS on water quality management just as they have in the past. If we do not adopt his amendment, then I believe we're into a bureaucratic nightmare in the sense that we're going to have the Department of Agriculture over here dealing with some aspects of water quantity and then we have the NRDS and then we have DEC, so it's becoming more complicated to no good end and I suggest probably