

so as I try and weed my way through this process, I'm finding it difficult to...to make sense of the issue, and quite frankly, I guess, I raise the same point that Senator Coordsen raised in that I'm unaware of any substantial water problems to the municipalities in our state at this point in time. And I'm wondering if it would not be better to take some more time as we look at this issue and study it in more detail, and that is not meant to be a delaying tactic, but rather one that will give all of us. I think, a better understanding of what is at hand on this issue and how we should deal with it. We did, in fact, take this issue on the road, so to speak, in the Natural Resources Committee this summer and fall. And there were very few people that attended those public hearings that had much to say about this issue, and even those who did, I must relate to you, didn't exactly know what they wanted, they just wanted something, some protection, but they weren't sure exactly what it was. And that's very difficult to pattern or shape statutes or law around when you're not sure, even those people who feel like they need something, can't articulate to you what it exactly is that they want, and it makes this issue very awkward to deal with when the very sources of the public that would like to see this issue addressed simply do not know, at this particular point, what it is they would actually like to see the state react to. I was in a meeting with Senator Beutler and Senator Wickersham, on Thursday of this past week, with some law professors from the university, and we were talking about the definition of municipal use. Now I may be wrong, and maybe I misunderstood the comments made there, but Senator Beutler, you were a part of that meeting. It was my understanding that one of the law professors indicated that there is no actual statutory definition of what municipal use means. I think as we discuss this issue it's, again, very difficult to talk about specifics when you don't even have a definition at this point in time in the statutes that deal with the issue of municipal use, and what that might entail. It might entail a number of different things from, as Senator Lamb indicated, domestic use of the water, to fire and police, or fire and hospital services, to parks and recreation, and golf courses. So there...there...there...that meaning could be very broad, and it's very difficult for us, again, to try and resolve a problem when we're not sure what we're even talking about relative to municipal use. Finally, I guess I'd have to say that a number of the people that I have spoken with in my constituencies and the area in south central Nebraska where I live, are concerned that in some way or another, through LB 306 we are moving