

being unreasonable in suggesting that we move forward and move forward this session to resolve this issue. I ask for your opposition to the Johnson motion to bracket and your support for the Beutler amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Madam President and members of the Legislature, obviously, I'm against the bracketing motion 'cause it's essentially a kill motion and it really troubles me when people are opposing a bill, not because of something they can articulate, but of...but because of things they can't articulate because then I can't respond to that. This idea of this particular bill, this goes back way before this year and last year, and I wanted to read to you from a study. This is the "Policy Issue Study on Integrated Management of Surface Water and Groundwater," expressing different ideas about what could and should take place with regard to this particular problem. And back in my first life in the Legislature I was running into these same kinds of arguments on bills in the early 1980s, '83, '84, and the Natural Resources Commission agreed and the Legislature funded comprehensive studies on different water issues by the Natural Resources Commission and, in April of 1986, six years ago, they said this: Allow public water systems to obtain surface water rights if their source of supply is dependent on induced recharge from a stream. Adoption of this alternative is recommended, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, and basically it is the concept of LB 306 that's been laying out there on the table for six years. It has been discussed in water circles for a whole number of years. We went through the interim study. Nobody showed particular interest. I don't know how many years you have to delay. What are we fearful of, the future? We all are, to a certain extent, but we can't harm our present and harm our neighbors for fear of our future. There is nothing wrong with this bill. There's nothing in this bill that hurts any existing surface or groundwater irrigator, puts cities at the tail end of the trail of rights, but it gives them some rights. It gives them some rights in the future so that they know that their domestic water supplies are protected, so that they know that the quarter of a billion dollar investment that they're making is protected. To say that there hasn't been enough study on this issue makes no sense whatsoever given the history of the debate on this particular issue. We have to come to terms with this issue and, in a larger sense in the future we have to come to terms with the conjunctive use issue. And