

SENATOR SCHMIT: Madam Chairman and members, it's kind of interesting to watch the lights up there and I would suggest that it's probably not the final vote on 306 yet. Senator Beutler, of course, is enough of an experienced legislator to know that he's not going to the bank yet with his bill, but I would have to say this; that it's sort of unusual that this is called "Agricultural Week", and I'm not going to mention this again, but we will get the usual editorials commending the rural people, but the facts are that rural is out and for those of you who thought you could take a vacation from it last week and come back this week and put on your straw hat and your bib overalls and your buckle-up shoes and put a straw between your teeth and play the loyal farmer and all is forgotten, I think you have to kind of understand now that the shoe is on the urban foot and is being placed at that part of the rural anatomy where it does the most good. And I don't know if the bill is as bad as those of us in the rural areas think it is or not, but I can certainly argue the position that Senator Rod Johnson took and others took that there is no real pressing need for the bill. There's no real pressing need for the bill today to protect urban water users. Not one urban water user in the State of Nebraska has ever been denied water because of the need of agriculture, nor will it ever occur. My concern is that the bill changes the course of the utilization of water for the maximum benefit in the State of Nebraska in a way which is not well planned and not well thought out. It's kind of interesting that we talk about the cost of the rural water...of the water systems in Omaha and Lincoln. Many years ago when we were discussing the problem that exists in the City of Omaha because the City of Omaha, from I believe the western or eastern part of the city to the Missouri River, uses the storm sewers and the rain sewers and the sanitary sewers are the same and, of course, whenever you get an inch or more of rain, why, the secondary sewage treatment overflows and all of us good folks who are environmentalists look the other way and pretend that it's not happening. But let the lagoon in Bellwood overflow into the ditch that goes into the Platte River and terrible things happen. Some ladies in Abie threw their wash water on the side hill in that community a few years ago and we had to put in a 440,000 dollar lagoon. The point I want to make is this, gentlemen and ladies, that we do not have, we do not have all of the facts that we need with which to make a decision as to whether or not you change the direction of the statutes in this degree in this state at this time, and those who have said, well, let's look again, were told and chided a bit because there was no one at the interim study