

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. President, members, I rise in opposition to the motion to overrule the agenda. I was one of the 24 senators that voted for this bill last time and the time before and I guess this would be the third time. It's a difficult issue for me as it is for many people in this body and to many Nebraskans and I think that everything I can tell from talking to the people involved is it's going to be an ongoing debate. I know that I am trying to learn more and more about it as time goes along and I think there's a lot more to learn about it. The siting process of a low-level nuclear waste facility for five states is a very significant problem and it is, quite frankly, Senator Hefner,...

(MACHINE MALFUNCTION. SOME DEBATE MAY BE LOST!)

SENATOR ASHFORD: ...determine how we deal with these kinds of issues in the future and I think it is of special importance. And...and in this case when we bandy the words about community consent, we bandy those about, that means consent and I have a hard time being around that. But I understand also the arguments on the other side and I...but, in my mind, it's going to take a lot more discussion and, as has been suggested, there will be some decisions, a decision coming down from the Supreme Court on...on some of the issues involved in the siting of this facility. But I would concur with Senator Moore that there are lots of priority bills, many priority bills that have not been considered, may not be considered on Select File even. This issue will not...will be here next year and I know that I'm one senator that am glad to have the time between now and then to continue to consult with people and to try to understand it to the best of my ability, but I can't, at this stage, overrule an agenda that has been set. Again, I would concur that Senator Baack, Speaker Baack has done a good job in trying to get these bills heard and I think it would be totally inappropriate, even though I certainly understand Senator Dierks' desire to get this bill heard again and maybe he has the votes to reconsider, but it would be totally inappropriate. And I guess I would say, in conclusion, that I am not convinced that it is absolutely critical that this vote be taken this year. I'm very sympathetic to his issue. I've, obviously, voted for it, but I'm also fairly well convinced that we can deal with this issue next year in either the community consent vein or I think Senator Beutler brought up an excellent point with his amendment on liability and I think that's going to be an ongoing concern