

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the body. This is a bill, LB 719, that I introduced in January, has had a hearing in Government Affairs and I would like to take this time to pull the bill from committee and I'll first of all extend...tell you the reason I have. This has to do with the boundary between Nebraska and Missouri, southeast corner of the state. I've passed out a map of the ground that we're concerned about. At the present time, the State of Missouri has, via the county officials, has sent out tax notices for some of the land that's in dispute as to the ownership. Backing up a little bit, I am on the Missouri River Boundary Commission, representing the Legislature. There are several that have been appointed to this over the years to work out disputes between the several states, whether it's Iowa, South Dakota or Missouri in this case. What we have here is some disputed land up and down the river, as you can see by the map, that is presently being contested. It's been this way for many years, at least 50 years, but there's increasing problem with landowners uncertain as where they pay they taxes, whether the ownership is in Missouri or Nebraska, as to who actually is...not so much who owns the land but in which state it is in. And, as you can see, it's become a sensitive issue in that...in there because government entities depend on the taxes that come from this land and the question has been what to do. Now, over the years the river has moved, up until perhaps the forties when it became quite stable, but a period of time between early...the 1900s, late 1800s and 1930 to '40, when the Corps of Engineers starting working on it, the river meandered quite extensive and with floods and so forth it strayed at different times cutting out sections of land, moving one way or the other and, as a result, you can see what is along the river there at this point that's in dispute. We've attempted to work out, over the last two or three years as part of the Missouri...the bound... the Nebraska's Boundary Commission and the State of Missouri as to what we can possibly do about this to avoid extensive litigation through the court system. Actually it goes back even many years beyond that. There was really a settlement in 1970 that was approved by this body in the Legislature, but was not approved by the Missouri House and Senate. At this stage, just last week both Houses of Missouri approved a resolution that would accept the proposed boundary line which returns it to the center line of the river as it flows today. The action now is dependent upon whether Nebraska follows through and will also accept the resol... accept the settlement. I have not passed those out and I... Senator Vrtiska will tell you more about that if some of you