

January 25, 1996 LB 584

support. We do have a lot of fishing areas that do need some maintenance and restoration. This will hopefully provide for some of that in the not too distant future. This is one of the great recreations that we do have available in our state. We don't have an ocean, we don't have mountains, and we do have some very, very good fishing and those opportunities should be preserved and enhanced and I think this bill will, will allow for that. So I do appreciate the amendment and encourage the body to support it. Thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Bromm. Senator Preister.

SENATOR PREISTER: Thank you, Honorable President, friends all. I appreciate Senator Hillman's changes also. I think that the changes that reduce the amount of increase, I mean we're talking about reducing an increase, and yet there is an increase here. And I, having sat in the committee, kind of got hooked on the bill myself and thought that it was a good idea because we do need some...thank you, Senator Hilgert, we do need some additional habitat improvement. It seems to me though, it's kind of the chicken and the egg, because the people in my district really don't have the kind of discretionary money to pay additional fees and they're saying, why should I pay more when I can't catch many fish anyway. So if you can't catch fish, let's not increase the license. And yet if we don't improve the habitat, there isn't going to be the availability of catching those additional fish. So I have some concerns with the increase, at the same time I see the value to actually doing the improvements. And those improvements, whether we use voluntary groups, and probably Bass Un...whatever the name is, Bass Unlimited or whatever, some of the fishing groups are are groups that are going to be helpful, but they, too, require the money. Those organization representatives are willing to contribute, those folks are willing to pay the fees, but the fees are also going to have to be paid by the rank and file of "fisherpersons" across the state. Many of the people in my district, perhaps those that are 18 and 19 that really are going to school and having difficulty financially are still going to have that with the five dollar increase. So are some of the retired or semi-retired people who still have to pay for their licenses. So much like Senator Schrock and others, I have real concerns and mixed feelings about what I'm going to do on this. And in terms of my district, this rates right up there almost with property taxes. I've gotten more calls on raising the