

life, property, severe damage, or injury, which is widespread, should be...make a county eligible, when all other things are present only if it is a natural disaster that we're talking about. The discussion on this bill earlier talked about natural disasters. The problems that I think Senator Vrtiska described to us that have occurred in his county were the result of what are called natural disasters. But in case I misunderstood, I would like to ask Senator Vrtiska a question. Senator Vrtiska, you talked about the floods and whatever problems resulted from that, were any of the problems that you have discussed with us that brought this bill to us, I am talking about the disaster aspect of it, were any of those man-made or caused by human beings?

SENATOR VRTISKA: No.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. The discussion had dealt with natural disasters, and what my amendment would do is restrict the type of disaster that would qualify a county for this special aid could only be a natural disaster, and there would have to be more than the mere threat of it. If there are basis for counties to be deemed eligible for disaster aid, there are some federal programs, some state programs, from discussions we've had, and the only reason this bill is brought before us, if I again understand correctly, is so that an emergency clause can be added and some money will be available quicker than if the ordinary claims process were to be resorted to. So I have explained in kind of an extended way what this amendment would do. Now I'm going to try to state it as succinctly as I can. If you adopt my amendment, we would strike the reference in Senator Vrtiska's bill to an already existing statute that defines disaster. I would substitute a definition of disaster, which is very similar to that found in the statutory reference except, instead of allowing the definition to include man-made causes, only natural disasters would qualify a county, city or village. Rather than allowing, as the existing statute does, the mere threat of these problems to qualify a county, city or village for this special aid, there would have to be the actual occurrence. And this aspect of it may be more significant than the man-made part. Nobody can predict if something appears to be about to happen that it will actually happen. So there would be no basis for determining the amount of money to be sought by way of a claim anyway. There should have to have been an actual occurrence so that the amount of damage can be quantified. It's