

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR DIERKS: And kick the irrigators right square in the teeth, the people that are bringing this state \$2.3 billion a year. It doesn't make sense. How can we even discuss the issue? The issue shouldn't even be here. This is nonsense. The study has never been done. Input from the public hasn't happened since this amendment was drafted and yet we are presenting this thing as the end all, save all piece of trash.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator. Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I guess the only comment I would like to make at this point is that, yes, I am not an irrigator, except what I do a little bit on my grass. I don't understand all of the intricacies of agriculture as some of my agriculture friends do, but I am smart enough to understand that we, in Nebraska, there is a relationship between surface and ground water. I am smart enough to understand that the federal courts have indicated in the Wyoming case and other cases that we, Nebraska, don't have any regulation on ground water as it relates to surface water, and we need to have a plan. I am smart enough yet to understand that Senator Beutler has gone through great lengths, more than I've seen the many chairmen do on these types of issues, to make sure that everyone has had their say, even to the point of delaying the bill coming out so they could further make changes and further try to get input from all sources. And I am also aware there are some groups that would like to go back probably to the seventeen, eighteen hundreds, and everything was fine because everybody left them alone, but those days are gone. I am also very aware that there are things in 108, a lot of things in 108 that I have some concerns with but not overly concerned that I would have not...that I would oppose the bill. I support the bill in this particular...in this form. It is complicated. There is a lot of bureaucracy but I know why that bureaucracy was there. It was added at the requests of a lot of rural people so that they would feel that they were protected as much as possible. And it would have been real easy for us to go ahead and say, no, that's too complicated, we are going to make it simple, but we didn't. We actually went the other route and said, we'll even make it more complicated in all of the rules and regs or all of the hoops that people need to go through so