

committee amendments, that added to the cumbersomeness of the legislation that we have. It added to the safeguards that we have. It added to those concerns about control at the local level through the NRDs and became a part of what we now have before us in the committee amendments. True, it could be simplified. True, there could be less of it. However, in the attempt to address the public concerns, in an attempt to legitimately draw people into the process and have their say, not only just be heard in terms of words, but to have their say be incorporated into the legislation, this is the result. After the amendments were drawn, they were sent back out. I believe it was in January when the committee first approved this amendment. We've had over a month that this particular amendment has been circulating and available to people for their comments. With some additional adjustments to that amendment that were done, we now have what is before us in AM3613, the committee amendment. I think that process has been very open. I support that kind of openness. I support that kind of public input, and I think this, LB 108, has had that, and I think because of that, we do not see what is traditionally seen as the rural-urban split on this bill. We are not split with all of the rural senators saying this is a bad piece of legislation. I think many of my colleagues recognize the fact that we need to do something to handle the...

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: One minute.

SENATOR PREISTER: ...disputes, those disputes that arise between surface and ground water irrigators, and this is a mechanism that allows that to happen without having to go into court, and to avoid the costly litigation that can result as a result of going into court. I support the openness in the public process. It's something that I pay attention to, and I think much of that concern has been addressed and at a later time I will talk about one of the flow charts, or a couple of them, actually, that was handed out in the packet, and if you choose to look at those, you will see, even though I don't have time right now to go into them, where there will be additional opportunities for public input and additional public hearings that will be held in the event that either the Department of Water Resources or the Natural Resources District make a determination that there needs to be additional work done on any kind of management within the NRD or within the state.