

SPEAKER WITHEM: Okay. Thank you. Senator Coordsen, on the Dierks amendment.

SENATOR COORDSEN: As I think all of you know, I am a nonirrigation farmer and I would share with you that there is life after water, but not very much. It was my understanding, and I will freely admit to have been in opposition to the original 108 because of the structure, primarily of that, with a central administration that tends not to be as filled with common sense as one might expect if we are to view how we, in central government, have operated in the past. It appears that there's a necessity and a need to reemphasize the authorities a natural resources district has, and to provide a system for natural resources district to recognize problems that exist within their localities. I rise to support the Dierks amendment because we haven't given the natural resources districts even one minute to see whether they're able to function. We feel that we must put in place a centrally operated hammer where a presumption or assumption is made that something needs to be done in some area of the state; and if that NRD does not do what central planning decides that needs to be done immediately, then central planning takes over. I think that the section of 108, the amendment that is being stricken by the Dierks amendment is, in fact, not needed at this time. We're making an assumption with this part of the amendment that the NRDs can't do a good job in their areas. I don't think that's a correct assumption for us to be making at this point in time. If there comes to a place where encouragement needs to be taken, a future Legislature can make that encouragement. Water, my friends, is a precious resource but it is a resource that is continually resupplied. What we don't use goes to sea level in some manner or the other. I just read a little article about the usage of water by irrigation agriculture in an aquaculture magazine, just this morning, how much water was used by irrigated agriculture. Irrigated agriculture doesn't consume water, it does use water; but there's an interpretation generally made, that irrigated agriculture uses water which, by extension, says that it disappears, it evaporates. The water that's used in irrigated agriculture in Nebraska, in addition to the economic and the feeding of people, the economic and the feeding of people...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR COORDSEN: ..the economic and the feeding of people,