

talk about water bill, how bad 108 is to them. They think that we don't care about the irrigators. We think that...they think that we're down here to set up an agency that's going to go in and control their water, shut their wells down. They're very concerned about that. They think they need to be treated equal. If you would treat all irrigators the same across the whole state, I don't think there would be a problem; but you're not doing that with 108. You're being very unfair with a class of irrigators up in northeast Nebraska, especially, and I think also, in probably central Nebraska. But, I think we need to stop and think what we're doing with this bill. It's not a bill that we need to move forward with. I think the Dierks amendment, it is a very good amendment. It still lets us move forward to try to work out some of these things but it treats everyone fairly. I think...take a look at what the Dierks amendment does. It's a very good amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Schellpeper. I'd like to recognize Senator Engel has from Dakota City Elementary, 47 fourth graders in the north balcony with their teacher, Bev Hubbard. Would you all stand and be recognized, please? On the Dierks amendment, we have Senator Dierks, Senator Wehrbein, Senator Beutler, Senator Hudkins, Senator Bromm, Senator Hillman, Senator Elmer, and Senator Jones with their lights on, and Senator Avery. Welcome to the line up, Senator Avery. Senator Dierks, you're recognized.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the body, to give you a little expansion of an answer that Senator Elmer tried to extract from me was that if I have... problems between surface irrigators and ground water irrigators, what am I worried about? I'm worried about the future, Senator Elmer. I'm worried about what compacts might come and what might happen to these people then. And I think the way this committee amendment that we're talking about today is drafted, it does just that. It caused me a great deal of worry about that. You know, I have to tell you that I have that much respect for the boards, the directors of the NRDs that I represent because they are...most of them are clients of mine. I used to do veterinary work for them. I've known, I think all but maybe two or three of them, very personally. They're good close friends and they're extremely capable people. And if there's a problem there, they're going to know it and they're going to be the first ones to take care of it. This is local control at its