

period in the history of the state of Nebraska. And if we don't receive over two and a half inches of rain yet the month of March, it will be the driest six months ever recorded. The reason I mention that is again to emphasize what I started out talking about relative to water when we left. Our streams are still flowing, our trees are still growing. People who are learned hydrologists but not practicing farmers might say that there are other reasons, but this phenomenon has changed dramatically since we have been able to reutilize, for the production of food, the water that was stored underground and, in our particular geological structure, is replenished from time to time and from various sources. Again I would caution you: be very careful, because if we have a dispute and a central agency has to make a decision during a period of water shortage, which we could well have, I would share with you from the perspective of irrigated agriculture that if the delivery mechanism is too limited during a period of drought, rather than pumping a sufficient amount one year and none the next, you can guarantee two crop failures by not having enough water where you may have had enough for one good crop and one crop failure. This is not a topic to be taken lightly. We in Nebraska, Senator Schrock, those that are opposed to this, are in fact in the business of feeding people, and using, and reusing, and continuing to use, and continuing to use, and recycling, and continue to use the waters. And as far as disputes with other states, our surface waters are fine, and it's nice to share with a neighbor, but what water leaves this state without having been used is a waste of a precious resource. And we ought to be very cautious that we have a system that is not under a threat of central control by someone who is not familiar with feeding people. With that, I would like to share the rest of my time with Senator Dierks.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Senator Dierks, you have about one and a half minutes.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens, and thank you, Senator Coordsen. I don't recall that I've ever had the ability to speak cut off because I'd talked too many times on one issue. This is the first time, Senator Bernard-Stevens. But I feel very strongly about this issue. And I just want other people to feel as strongly about it as I do, from the same standpoint that I do, from the same...coming from the same area that I'm coming from as far as allowing government, state government to take...usurp some of the abilities that the local