

another thing, that during the course of the shutdown of the cleanups, whether or not the DEQ had the authority to pay interest on back bills became a big question and the Attorney General ruled that they didn't have the authority to do that. This legislation provides that under the Prompt Payment Act of Nebraska DEQ would have authority and the obligation to pay interest on back payments and under the Prompt Payment Act, if a...if a bill is submitted and accepted and not paid, then after 60 days then it goes back to 31 days when the interest starts. However, the applicant does need to request interest and the time limit on that is 90 days, and I'm sure they would methodically do that. So that clears up the interest question that has been in limbo and that's another important element of the bill. By doing what we're doing, we estimate that we will save a substantial amount of money in paying these back bills in interest and administrative costs, so I'm very, very enthused about that part of the bill. I think I, Mister...Madam President, will stop speaking for a few moments and see if there are questions or others who would like to talk.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Bromm. Your light is next? Did you want to go on? Senator Cudaback. There's about 16 minutes left on the bill.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Madam President and members, I won't take up a lot of time here. I just hope everybody's paying attention to this particular bill. This could be one of the most important, if not the most important, bill of the session. In my area alone it's amounted to tens of thousands of dollars, many hardships. We have...have many situations I could go into. I won't for the lack of time, but it could be one of the most important issues of the session. It's out there. It can happen in your district. It can happen in many districts around. And we hate to point fingers. That time is passed. We don't want to point fingers, but we must address the problem. I do thank the Natural Resources Committee. We should thank Senator Landis and Senator Bromm for bringing this to us. Pay attention to it. It is important and it could happen to all of us. Thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thanks, Senator Cudaback. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Madam Speaker and members, Senator Bromm, just a quick question. I applaud what you've done and I have no fault with anything. I wanted to assure the present tax is