

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

March 22, 1999 LB 142

left out of the process. I consider that to be logical and common sense and true, I don't think the people thought about all of those various questions, they weren't asked to. But if the logic that says you can do nothing but give the money to those political subdivisions and make no compensation to others who are losing the money, if that is the logic that you want to follow for all political subdivisions, then I guess I would stand by it for NRDs in this particular instance. But you know and I know that we're going to make an adjustment for the community colleges. That's been quite clear from the conversation that has come before that is going to happen. If that's going to happen, then how can one argue that the will of the people can be broken in one case, but not in the other? I think what has to be admitted is that the question is open; that we ought to be able to consider both the community colleges and the NRDs and any others who lost money, and that clearly the people did not speak to that issue. Is it bad that the NRDs didn't want to take the Environmental Trust money? I don't understand how that's a negative to the NRDs? The Environmental Trust Fund was a fund that originally didn't give any money to the NRDs, or gave very little, as a practical matter. There's been a lot of work with the Environmental Trust and in recent years very significant funding has come to the NRDs from the Environmental Trust. But a lot of it has been for very specific projects that needed to be, that could not otherwise be done. For example, in the Republican River area, we've been involved with a lawsuit with Kansas. An enormous, enormous cost will attach to that lawsuit. And one of the initial costs that attaches to that lawsuit is the need to do detailed studies in the Republican River Basin on the groundwater aquifer, where that water is, how it relates to the Republican River water, and drawing very exact and detailed lines with regard to the interaction of water all up and down the Republican Basin and in the tributaries to the Republican River. Now the Environmental Trust contributed very large amounts of money and will continue to contribute very large amounts of money through those detailed hydrological studies that needed to be done in those areas. But the Environmental Trust also has...

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...other goals and other projects that NRDs