

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

March 29, 1999 LB 822

Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Debate is ceased and I will recognize Senator Beutler, for closing on his amendment to the committee amendments.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Schimek, members of the Legislature, all this amendment does is to suggest a slower and more cautious approach to allowing expansions of existing operations in these areas that deal with the trout streams. As I indicated to you earlier, under the green copy of the bill no expansions whatsoever would have been allowed for these operations. Under the committee amendment, depending on the class you're talking about, the expansion could be 5,000 animal units, could be 19,000 animal units, could be 25,000 animal units, could be very large indeed, and just one operation, just one operation, just one class II operation could get ten times as big as it is today under the expansion rules of the committee amendment. So all I'm suggesting is that the expansion rule treat the little guy more like the big guy and simply allow an expansion of 4,000 animal units regardless of the class that may exist in the particular area today. So everybody can still expand. If you're a 20,000-unit operation, which is really big, you can still expand by 20 percent. And the reason, part of the reason that I'm suggesting this slow approach is, if you feel that the bill is worthwhile in protecting trout streams, then surely you must be asking yourself the question how much greater load can some of these areas bear before the trout stream is degraded. And you heard the statement made that there was no testimony with regard to the committee amendment. That is, there was no testimony saying how much additional burden the trout streams could bear. And so, in light of that lack of information, in light of the fact that we're not talking about cutting back any existing operations and suggesting only a slower rate of expansion, which in the future, if it is shown that there is no detriment to the stream, we can always come back in and change to a higher rate of expansion. Or maybe what we ought to do is have no rate at all in there and simply leave it to DEQ to determine, on the basis of continuing monitoring on some regular basis, whether the stream is being negatively affected or not.