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amendment is adopted, we cannot believe that any NRD programs are going to be affected in the slightest with the exception of Nemaha, and that NRD might have a reduction in their capacity to spend of \$25,000; have a reduction in their capacity to spend of \$25,000. Out of all the NRDs in the state, that is the only one that we can project would be affected at all. It will not result, adoption of this amendment will not result in the cessation of water quality programs, erosion programs, tree planting programs. It will not result in a cessation or a reduction in any of those programs. It changes the way or the source for their funding. And the real choice is whether or not you want to have the counties bear the burden of raising extra dollars from local property taxes, or you want to cause the NRDs to make those kinds of decisions. And, again, I believe it is more appropriate that we cause the NRDs to make those decisions because we have not done anything to date that really cause them to look at their programs and to become even more efficient and effective than they may already be. We have asked them to do nothing, nothing. At the same time, we have reduced aggregate resources for counties last year by about \$9 million. Counties, what kind of essential services do counties deliver? Do you feel good about having a sheriff? Do you feel good about having roads? We took \$9 million away from the counties last year, and you're proposing in the committee's budget this year to take \$5.8 million away from them. Now maybe they can make that up with property taxes. Some of them can't. But you'll be giving state dollars to a political subdivision that doesn't need them to provide essential services and taking them away from a political subdivision that may need them to deliver essential services. I think that it is reasonable to make the choice for the amendment because at least that preserves our dollars in the arena where there is a chance that they will be essential for services instead of putting them in a program where we know absolutely that they are not essential for services.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Further discussion, Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I do rise in opposition of the amendment, even though Senator Wickersham seems to point out or want to say that the NRDs actually won't be losing money. But I just want to say