

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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this is a cleanup bill that was necessary and it has to do with well permits and water permits. These are recommendations brought to us by the Department of Water Resources. One provision...of the three provisions, one provision allows the holder of a small water right to divert or pump at a rate greater than permitted, so long as the total pumped over a seven-day period does not exceed the amount that could have been pumped continuously at the permitted rate over the same period of time. For example, in the past, if the Department of Water Resources would have followed the letter to the law, a person maybe could have been turning their well off and on, maybe every two hours; this allows them to accumulate the number of hours needed to pump that well and to accumulate that over a seven-day period. It also allows the stacking of water rights. If you have some small water rights and you want to put them all on one well, you can do that, and it also has a provision for some island wells. There was some description...discrepancies on what was an island well and what was a surface water well as a concern of being within 50 feet of the bank of a tributary or a stream, and so these three items have been amended into LB 900. And the amendments are necessary to keep our irrigators with small rates of diversion that cannot irrigate their fields efficiently at a lower rate. So, if you have any questions, I would be glad to try and answer them.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Debate on the committee amendments?  
Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the body. I just stand up in support of LB 900. I do believe that these merged agencies will encourage cooperation and will provide what you call a one-stop shopping for farmers and those interested in water issues, and the fact that it will now cover surface water issues, ground water issues, and also land and water conservation areas. They will be sharing a data base after the two agencies are combined, which at this time, as Senator Schrock said, may not be saving a lot of money, but certainly in the future will add some efficiencies. It will also maintain the Natural Resource Commission, and this is a group of 16 members that are appointed, and they deal with the grants that also deal with soil and water conservation projects. So I ask the body to support. I believe this is one step forward in