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LB 1138

irrigation wells. I don't know what that is. Is that equalization or is that...what does that relate to? Now if you're dealing with a fertilizer tax and you're talking about the number of irrigation wells, that makes a lot of sense. But when you're talking about state sales and income tax dollars, does it really make sense or is it just a mechanism for shifting funds someplace where Senator Wickersham thinks they would do more good? I think you should think real hard about any sort of additional equalization in a state aid formula, especially when the people involved don't want it. With regard to the NRDs, Senator Wickersham had a formula he wanted to put into place, a new one, you know, it required the NRDs to kind of stuff Omaha and Lincoln because it shifted a million dollars to places outside...from Omaha and Lincoln to places outside Omaha and Lincoln. And the rural commissioners of the NRDs said, no, we don't want to do that. We think it's fair with Omaha and Lincoln the way we have it, we don't want to do that. So Senator Wickersham took it out of the bill, but he also took out the 2 million-plus dollars that he had put in there to substitute for the fertilizer tax money, as a kind of punishment, I guess, I don't know. He can explain that. But suddenly the money is gone that would have been the money to replace the fertilizer tax, so now they're in a bind. Now Senator Wickersham is putting them in a box and the box is you have to raise your property taxes by 20, 30, 40 percent to make up the fertilizer tax money, and that's how you'll make it up.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Fat chance, huh? Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Raikes, on the Wickersham amendment to the committee amendments to LB 1138.

SENATOR RAIKES: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I'm listening to what Senator Beutler has to say about the bill and find a lot of his comments interesting. First, a little bit about the comparison of the schools aid formula. There is a growth rate in the school aid formula. You grow needs by a factor that's related to the base limitation rate in addition to a local choice option. And he mentioned the philosophy of the