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FLOOR DEBATE

February 11, 2003 LB 186

SPEAKER BROMM: Debate is ceased. Senator Baker, you're recognized to close on the advancement of LB 186.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank everyone for your patience and the discussion we've had here. I...if we can make this bill better on Select File, that's fine. I'm willing to work with people on this. I just think that we need to go ahead and move forward today. It's an issue that obviously has a lot of interest in the body. I didn't realize. You can never predict where 49 of us may go on a discussion like this. But it's been interesting. And I think everyone involved wants to maintain our scenic byways or highways, and so on, et cetera. We don't want junkyards all over the place. I certainly don't. I don't want them even near my place. But this is an issue of who has jurisdiction. And right now, it's apparently not working real well. I get comments off the mike from senators saying, there's a junkyard over here, there's one over there. Department of Roads isn't doing it. And apparently county zoning boards are not taking it seriously. And in some cases I do believe there's a lot of these junkyards have been grandfathered in. But this is going to focus the attention back on the county zoning boards. If they have a problem, people know where to go. They're not going to be able to say, well, go talk to Department of Roads, and they're going to say, no, it's a local issue, go talk to your zoning board, and so on. It's going to be addressed if we pass this bill. It's going to fall back on the counties. If you're concerned about the cost to the counties, somebody pointed out the state has been collecting a \$50 per junkyard fee on an annual basis. The counties can put a fee on this, register these junkyards. I'm sure some of them are now. But if it's a cost issue, assess a fee on these junkyards. And make them adhere to the county zoning standards. If we advance this bill, I guarantee you I will find out exactly how many counties are zoned and how many are not. There's conflicting interest out there. But I'll find out, and we'll get it from someone. Apparently, nobody really knows, other than Platte...there's three counties not zoned: Platte, Thurston, and Nuckolls County. And somebody in the Rotunda said there was a fourth county that they thought was not zoned but was working on it. So we will get that information for you. I