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FLOOR DEBATE

February 19, 2003 LB 143

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Senator Cudaback, members. Senator Schrock, thank you. The provisions under this bill will apply to the Missouri River Wastewater Treatment Plant that's located in Omaha, particularly, located in my district. And I would submit to the members that this facility in Omaha is in need of much greater degree of oversight by the DEQ. I actually have a bill in, it's with the Urban Affairs Committee, to dramatically increase the degree of oversight by citizens within the community. And I would be very, very reluctant to support expanding the window for licensure permits from five years to ten years. So assuming that LB 143 is successful at General File, I will have an amendment to exempt wastewater treatment plants in cities of a metropolitan class from this bill. In my discussions with the DEQ, they indicate to me that this would not significantly increase their workload. But the last thing that I want to do is to decrease the oversight for the facility that's located in my district. It has dramatically negatively impacted the quality of life of citizens within my community, particularly the elderly. And I cannot support this measure with the inclusion of the facility that's within my district, namely, the Missouri River Wastewater Treatment Plant. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Synowiecki. Further discussion on the advancement of LB 143? Senator Schrock, there are no lights on. Did you wish to close on the advancement?

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I would like to, in closing, respond to Senator Synowiecki's concerns. If you have a concern or a complaint about a wastewater site, you can lodge a complaint any time you want to. And every time a complaint is lodged, there will be an investigation. So you could lodge a complaint every month, and there would be a monthly investigation of that complaint. These are low-risk environmental sites. And I would argue that allowing them to extend the permitting period from five years to up to ten years...and really, what has happened is, all the permits are up at the same time, and it is time consuming to renew the permits. So what they want to do is let some of them go six years, some of them go seven years, some of them go eight