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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR SCHROCK: I would like to see the state, in some way or another, and we did it in the alluvial basin, cost-share on meters. And that may not be possible. But whether it comes from the state General Fund, whether it comes from the Soil and Water Conservation Fund, or whether it actually comes from the tax that's levied on land in that NRD, or maybe a combination of all three, I would like to see us cost-share on some of these irrigation...on these irrigation wells that are going to be metered, at some level. I would prefer a 50 percent cost share, and...like we did in the alluvial basin.

SENATOR BEUTLER: In the...I want to take a situation that you're aware of, and compare it in a little more depth than we have in the past. But you're certainly aware of the situation in the Upper Republican, where they've had a very elaborate management system, and curtailed the use of water. They're problem is the lack of enough water. And they have, as I understand it, metered all of their ground water wells, at least in a large portion of their NRD. And if I'm remembering right...let me say it this way, and you correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the NRD picked up, basically, most of the management costs for this more elaborate system, whether it was research, or whatever was needed to get the system in place. But the meters themselves were part of the landowner cost. Would that be accurate?

SENATOR SCHROCK: That is correct. And they are regulated as to the amount of water they can use.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay. Now, that was the way it was done then. But now we seem to be instituting a system where, instead of the NRD and the local landowner paying for whatever management needs to be done, we're injecting the state into the process, and the taxpayers all over the state into the process, of paying for what must be done in order to have the kind of management area that the conditions prescribe. Would that be accurate?

SENATOR SCHROCK: But let me explain to you what I think the difference is between the Upper Republican...

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay.