

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 11, 2003 LB 619

SENATOR SCHROCK: And if you're willing, the bill that I introduced in the Revenue Committee...

SPEAKER BROMM: Time. Thank you, Senator Beutler and Senator Schrock. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. President, members, I'm going to jump in a little bit, because I'm kind of interested in the fairness issue. Would you like to finish what you were saying, Senator Schrock?

SENATOR SCHROCK: (Microphone malfunction)...Senator Wehrbein. If the body is willing, I'm willing to amend that bill that I introduced in Revenue Committee that would allow the NRDs in water management areas to increase their taxes by half a cent. I'd go along with that. Keep in mind, the bill isn't mandatory. It just would allow them to do that.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Okay. Thank you. I just...the reason I wanted to make some comments, I...as you'll get into the Nebraska Water Conservation Fund, that we're talking about here, \$2.7 million, and we did cut it a million last year. And as whether it's dryland or irrigated, I was interested to see that Farm Bureau, in this case, testified for the bill. But it is true that we are spreading the resources that we put into this thinner. It essentially is going now for dams, reuse pits, and terraces installed, which...terraces are heavily installed in dryland Nebraska, I would say, and heavily in eastern Nebraska. And this broadens the use of this fund to go to the irrigated areas. And I don't...I'm going to support the bill, and I don't have any problem with what's being proposed. I simply wanted to make the point, perhaps for those that are interested in this, and as we go through the budgets which we're sitting through our hearings right now, and everyone thinks we need to cut the other person but don't cut my program...and I'm just thinking here that in the big picture, once again, that it's important that we all are going to have to probably pay more for the programs that we need, whether it's fee-based or whether it's tax-based through General Fund, or whatever, conserving water, whether it's through dryland terraces and dams, or whether it's meters on irrigation, pumps. However that may be, I think it's