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April 3, 2003 LB 165

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Preister. You've heard the opening on AM1151, offered by Senator Preister to the Natural Resources Committee bill, LB 165. Open for discussion on that. Senator Schrock.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, Senator Preister, you always have good ideas, but we may disagree on what is a good idea and what isn't a good idea. I am going to oppose this amendment for the following reasons. The first part of the amendment has some language in there about Nebraska should be remaining a public power state. Certainly cannot disagree with that, although I would tell you that in the year 2000 we did pass LB 901, which specifically stated that Nebraska should not deregulate as long as it was in the best interest of the citizens of the state that we remain a public power state. And I think you know that our rates in Nebraska are competitive, if not lower than the states around us, and so LB 901 I believe covers that. I have no question...I don't want to question your intentions there because they're good. The part about the extraordinary circumstances, and you talked about this private company that is managing eight other plants and you talked about three of those plants being downgraded, during that time Cooper Nuclear Plant was downgraded twice. And I think that's a decision that should be made by the NPPD Board of Directors and I don't think we should call it extraordinary circumstances because I don't think those other plants are being managed by this management company because of extraordinary circumstances. I think they felt that it was a good management decision. And, therefore, I would oppose the part that would require a two-thirds majority vote of the board involved to have this management company manage their plant. I understand your intentions are honorable. It's good to have a discussion. I can tell you that the NPPD has looked at your amendment and would rather not see it adopted. I don't know that it would cause a lot of problem. I don't know that it would cause a lot of problem, but I think only in the case of salary increases does it require a two-thirds majority vote by the members of that board at the present time. This could be a very important decision for them. I don't know how controversy (sic) it's going to be, but I think the majority should rule. And with that, I would oppose your amendment. I hope that doesn't bother