

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

April 7, 2003

LB 754

individuals that want to expand to go through DEQ or other highly expensive permitting processes and spend up to 25 to 50 thousand dollars without any opportunity for them to know they have a reasonable chance of receiving their permit because they, on their permit and on their request, have met all the conditions. So what we're trying to set up here is a process, and the process is you go to the county, either the zoning authority or the county board, and you get an initial okay. Then you go to DEQ; you meet their requirements. You're still meeting the local requirements that have been set out in zoning statute...or zoning rules, which is different than what we're talking about here. This is the end result. And then you come back to the county for the final okay because you have met all of their previous requirements. Now you've got the DEQ permit in hand and, contingent upon other future obligations that you've agreed to, you're granted the right to either build a facility, to expand your facility. and we're not talking about large facilities. We have stories in our committee hearing, a hundred-head operation wanted to expand; denied for whatever reason. Some of them might have been legitimate and there is nothing that would prohibit them from making those same determinations here. But I think what we're talking about here is how do we improve the existing process.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR ERDMAN: The individuals that came and testified in favor of the bill testified in support of local zoning. They testified in favor of a fair process. They testified in favor of having an opportunity to create an environment that they think is important for their family to live in, for their community to grow. And if you look around in rural Nebraska, the way that agriculture goes is generally the way that our local economies go. And so I think what we're trying to propose here, and I think what we're going to end up with if the body will work, largely due to Senator Bromm's efforts, to Rick Leonard's efforts and Senator Kremer's efforts, as well as Senator Burling, is we're going to come up with a process that's fair, that balances the interests. Not everybody is probably going to be excited about it, but we do have some problems and I think we need to do our best to come up with a solution. I