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interest in this issue, but I think he's raising a red flag here that doesn't need to be raised and, from that standpoint, I will oppose returning this bill to Select File. We've been working with this bill since its introduction. The concept was thought of back in...last fall, so everybody has known about this, and I think to come in at this last minute with a concern that may not even be there, and I would say isn't there, is something we should not do at this late date.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Schrock. Senator Vrtiska.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I, too, rise to oppose this, and for some of the same reason. I think it's very unfortunately that the senator would bring in a amendment of this type at this late date and not give us a chance to at least be able to review and study it a little bit quicker. I'm disappointed that this has to come about. I know that Senator Preister has a big interest in this, and he should have and the rest of you should have, but I don't see this as being an issue that we need to spend all this time on. We've thoroughly debated this bill. It's been moved ahead because of a lot of reason that we talked about, the future of public power in this state and the ability to...of keeping nuclear...Cooper Nuclear Plant on line, the value that it brings in the cost of public power in this district. And I just have to come to you and ask you not to support returning this bill for this purpose. I don't think it provides any more protection than is already there. We have visited with the public power district at length over this entire piece of legislation. There seemed to be a general agreement that everything that needed to be in the bill was there and that all the protections are already in the bill, and I'm just...I just rise in strong opposition to returning this bill to put this specific amendment on. And with that, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Vrtiska. Senator Preister.

SENATOR PREISTER: Thank you, Mr. President. I would agree with Senator Schrock that this is not a signed agreement, not signed yet. However, the agreement which wasn't even available to the board members of NPPD or to us or to anyone, for that matter,