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LB 440

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President, members. Senator Beutler, I'm not embarrassed to say that you have confused me, so let's explore this a bit. As I understand it, Senator Thompson introduced a bill, LB 440, that, while cities didn't really like, they begrudgingly supported it. And then in committee it became clear that Lincoln had bonded based on this income stream and that's something that, while I partially agree with, I think we need to explore a little bit because there's other streams that I'm sure other cities have bonded other than the MIRF money. So I understand to a certain extent your argument, but I'm not sure it's entirely...and I don't want to say inaccurate, but I think there's other obligations that cities might make, and we can explore that. But again, Senator Thompson introduced this bill that had begrudging city support. Then Lincoln came about in the Appropriations Committee and said that this will hurt us because we've obligated this income stream from MIRF to satisfy some bonds. So then, in order to still make the cut, what we did was we cut aid to municipalities, which no city supported, in order to protect the income obligation for the city of Lincoln. And I'm trying to...I'm trying to figure this out. I mean when I first read the amendment I thought there's no way I'm going to support this, but as you explained this, it's so bizarre, that maybe there's some legitimacy to it. And I'm not trying to be funny. (Laughter) I'm not trying to be funny, but it...if we're going to cut, let's cut. If we're going to eliminate the MIRF fund, then let's eliminate it. But let's not eliminate it for everybody except for the city of the primary class, is what I'm suggesting. And I'm not trying to be funny when I say that it's bizarre. I'm trying to understand this. And, Senator Beutler, if you'd like a little bit of my time to maybe further flesh this out. And again, what I'm trying to say is that the city of Omaha, speaking for myself, they do things like city or swimming pool renovations, they put...renovated the Civic Auditorium based on the MIRF money, and what I'm trying to say is, while they might have paid for those renovations and improvements with the MIRF money, I'm sure they obligated some other income stream to satisfy bonds. And so I guess what I'm trying to understand is why is it, if Omaha has done this, and I'm sure other cities have done it as well, obligated other income streams for bonds,