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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 754

and I'm opposed to Senator Chambers' amendment. You know, what Senator Wehrbein is talking about with the gentleman from Banner County is not something new to me, since Banner County is in my district. And I have a chance to talk to a lot of high school students and one of the questions I ask them is, how many of you are coming back to the farm? And generally, out of a class of 25 or 30 kids, 1 kid will raise their hand. Now I can think back to my high school class of 33 and I think there's only 2 of us that are back actively engaged in agriculture, and everyone else is off doing something else. And I think there is something to be said for the reality that we tell people not to come back. We tell young people, don't go involved in farming. We tell them all the bad things, and part of that is because our mentality is, no matter how good it is, it should always be better. This weekend we got rain. We want more. If prices are this amount, we want more, and that's part of our society and that's part of our mentality. But I would like to address something that has been brought up about the hearing and that is somehow that the people that testified in favor of this bill wanted a couple of things. One, they don't want zoning. That is the most ridiculous thing I've heard. Those individuals that testified were in favor of the process. They were in favor of zoning. What they wanted to have is a process that was fair to them. They didn't say, grant my approval...grant my permit or deny my permit. They just said, give me a process that we know how to live by, period. Some of the individuals that testified in favor of the bill had operations or had applications for hog operations and other livestock facilities, as small as 2,000 head, denied. Those are the people that also testified in favor of the bill. Some of the people that testified in opposition did have good points. Some of them that testified in opposition had sent out some information that I think is absolutely misleading and has led to some of the discussion about this bill. So there's a lot of heated opinions about this, no doubt, but what I rise to say is, is that we can either deal with the realities that we can control, or we can stick our head in the sand. If we set out a process that's fair, then it does exactly what the opponents of the proposal would have them do, and that is, if you don't want the large-size facilities, zone them out. If you do want them and you do want all livestock, whatever size that might look like, put a fair process out there. Because as