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LB 754

SENATOR McDONALD: Mr. President and members of the body, I support Senator Beutler's amendment because I truly believe that we are not following the correct process set out in our rules with LB 754. We all know how our Legislature process is supposed to work. We introduce a bill and it's referenced to a committee based on its subject matter. LB 754 was sent to the Agricultural Committee because it dealt with livestock friendly counties. After the public hearing, a committee amendment was developed that contained brand new language on county zoning. Language amends county zoning statutes that was not in the original green copy of LB 754. The county board members and the planning commission members in my district did not have the opportunity to explain the problems these provisions will cause at the county level, and these changes in county zoning requirements will cause problems at the county level. We adopted Senator Bromm's amendment so that the requirements now apply only to agricultural applications. That amendment sets up a higher bar for rural communities in planning their land use for agricultural purposes. It treats urban counties differently than rural counties. Urban counties don't have to make final determinations. They don't have to make a list of factual findings. Urban counties will not be held to the same legal requirements as rural counties. With the addition of the Bromm amendment, we've made a bad bill even worse and now we have two sets of standards for counties, one for urban counties and one for rural counties. And the real reason behind this bill is...if the real reason behind this bill is to help livestock friendly producers find friendly counties in which to locate, then the sponsor of LB 754 should not object to Beutler's amendment. It leaves their public...it leaves their publicly stated purpose intact. If they object to Senator Beutler's amendment, which removes the county zoning language, they will show that the livestock friendly portion of the bill is not the real and true purpose of this bill. The rural citizens in my counties oppose the bill. The rural county boards in my district oppose the bill. The rural planning commissioners in my district oppose the bill. And for many of the rural senators that support this, you do have people in your districts that also oppose the bill because I've received letters from them, and I've received letters from Hamilton County, and this was