

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

January 26, 2004 LB 32

amendment, I echo Senator Mines' opinion about the amendment. I actually sat down with Norm Jackman and Bob Sink, probably...and the city of Omaha, probably about a month ago, and I really applaud their efforts. I feel a heck of a lot more comfortable with the amendment that's upcoming than I do with the original LB 32. Now, here's the question. Senator Schrock said, I don't want the accolades; I want your vote. Here's my problem. I believe that we still have an inequity, that this isn't necessary, and that we have a huge federal government intervention problem here. Let me lay that out. The lack of knowledge that the people of the state of Nebraska, specifically, in my case, the people of Omaha, had about this issue or the understanding of this issue, where the waters are that do not meet the water quality standards; still probably a huge issue. The total waste flow the water body is able to receive and still meet water quality standards, with a margin of safety, I might add, that is another issue. And the fact that we are going to tax our citizens. Senator Schrock brought that up. This is...and I don't want to put words in his mouth, and I wouldn't venture to do that. This is a tax masquerading as a fee. Another part of the inequity, we're punishing or hitting places of businesses, churches, schools, shopping malls, car lots, in a place like Douglas County that...Douglas County is a concrete jungle, folks. Everybody in Douglas County should pay this. All the folks that have spoken earlier have made some very decent points. But the fact of the matter is, if a church gets nailed with a fee as far as this goes, that's double taxation for that citizen who goes to that church. Not only is that citizen being taxed, but then he goes up to church and says, oh, by the way, Mr. Parishioner, you're being charged for this; wait, wait a minute, I already got charged. No, you get charged here too, because we have a huge, huge problem. There are issues there. I brought up the fact that it isn't necessary. Really, the fact of the matter is, right now, the bonding authority that is guaranteed statutorily to all of these municipalities, and a property tax ability that Senator Beutler eloquently spoke of is there. I don't want our citizens to be taxed any more than they need to be, but the fact of the matter is, you toss a property tax or a sales tax or an income tax or a bond at them, they're going to know what's hitting them. Here, this is really convoluted, folks. I don't know what to do with