

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

March 3, 2004

LB 962

are going to be the least affected. But as you go west, they need the revenue and they need it for matching funds, and they will need it. But, you know, I think we should focus on what's at hand; not try and figure out how much money is going to be needed three years from now. Senator Beutler, maybe a water fee is coming some day. I certainly will resist it at this time. And...

SENATOR BEUTLER: (Microphone malfunction) (Inaudible.)

SENATOR SCHROCK: No, no, no. This year, next year. When you and I are gone then other people will haggle over that. But I can't accept it this year. We have what we call out there, Senator Beutler and Senator Vrtiska, nonequalized districts when it comes to...when it comes to school...state aid for schools. You know what that means, Senator Beutler? That means that they are wealthy enough that they don't need any state aid, equalization aid. I happen to have three of those districts in my legislative district and you know what they look like? They're small communities with small schools, but they have a lot of irrigated land and it's high valued. And then I have four counties on the Kansas border that struggle economically. They're losing population. They don't have as much irrigated land, and we have to send a lot of state aid to those schools because it's dryland and it's pasture and it's...well, I think former Senator Coordsen had a pretty good description. He called his farm "Poverty Nob." He didn't have any...he didn't have any irrigated land out there. And so the Hebron district was an equalized district. It needed money. But I've got districts that don't need any state aid for their schools. The more land that's developed, the less money you're going to send out there for state aid for schools. Because there's a lot of property there, it generates a lot of tax dollars. So it cuts both ways. I'd like to get down the road with this. I think it's necessary. Two and a half million, in light of things, is not a lot to spend on our...for our water resources. Yes, the 49 members on the task force, most of them were bias towards the importance of agriculture and the importance of irrigation in their areas, because a lot of them on the task force were irrigators. With that, I'd give the rest of my time back to the Chair.