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FLOOR DEBATE

March 10, 2004      LB 869, 962

SENATOR BEUTLER:      Senator, thank you, and I'm sorry I missed that in the committee amendment. But I did want to take this opportunity to talk about the Environmental Trust and how it's approached, and again, I wanted to basically praise the fact that state government is looking for complementary funding from the Environmental Trust. I think that's appropriate. But there's also a kind of fine line there, because the trust was never set up to be a substitute for state spending. It was never designed to be the funding for state regulatory programs or state grant programs. And I want to read some things out of the statutes with regard to the Environmental Trust in that regard. But that doesn't...but in having said that, I want to emphasize also that that doesn't mean that the Environmental Trust can't complement and assist, and they could do that in this case, for example, if it was high enough ranked priority. Likewise, they assisted last year in funding...

SENATOR CUDABACK:      One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER:      ...the water policy study group that came up with LB 962. Half of that or better than half of that I think was funded, that whole study was funded, by the Environmental Trust through a competitive grant, which makes a lot of sense, I think, especially because that was a study group that wasn't part of the regulatory program. I'm not going to have time here to read you the things that I...the two or three short things that I think are important from the Environmental Trust statutes, but I will take that occasion on my next opportunity to speak. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK:      Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Kremer, on advancement of LB 869.

SENATOR KREMER:      I guess I was going to, when I pressed my light when Senator Beutler was talking, to address that, but then we've already answered that. I have a graph here that shows from 1990 to 2000 all the noxious weeds, and they've declined substantially, almost a half of what they were at one time. So I think the program is being...is successful. The counties, some of the counties maybe are backing off from what they were