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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: I'm sorry to sound so agitated. I know everybody is trying to do the proportional and right thing. But Senator Schrock, I know he suspects, and I'm willing to say right here on the floor today, several millions of dollars are going to be spent buying out water rights. There is no other way to cut a deal with Wyoming and Colorado that works, in my opinion. And I think we have other history to show us how we've failed in this area in the past. In the Republican River Valley, we waited, we waited, we waited, we didn't settle it earlier. People kept punching down ground water wells one after another while we waited year after year after year and didn't settle that matter. And now you know what's happening? They're announcing in the Republican River Basin that some of the irrigators are only getting 7 or 8 inches of water. Takes 18 inches of water, generally speaking, to plant a corn crop. Corn is out down there now for those people. Corn might have been in if we had stopped the punching of the wells and allowed for enough water for the people who had the wells to continue to have a corn crop. But failed policy has resulted in what's happening down there, and the failed policy is in part because we don't have the courage to overlook the people who are immediately interested. They always say, no, no, no, wait, wait, wait, you can't do this, you can't do this, when when we look at it ourselves in an objective sense we know what needs to be done, we talk in quiet circles around the Legislature about what needs to be done, but we don't do it. When somebody in the Legislature who's not immediately affected politically tries to do it, then the rest of the Legislature rises up in opposition, instead of sitting quietly and let happen that which they know must be done if we're going to provide the kind of leadership this state needs. The evidence of failure is all over the place, all over the state, on this water policy issue. Just open your eyes.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Thank you.