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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 32

amendments to the bill at this time, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Schrock, you're recognized to open on advancement of LB 32.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, the purpose of this bill is to raise the maximum amount per diem expenditures for natural resource district board members from \$2,800 per calendar year to \$3,600 per calendar year. Since the passage of LB 962 and other water-related issues, which has made several changes to the water management status for natural resource districts, the directors are spending more days each month meeting with local working groups to develop water management plans. At the present time, they can receive \$70 per day for work done on natural resource issues that pertain to their NRD. And what we're finding out with the new duties and with all the water issues that are in front of these NRDs, that many of our board members who are hardworking are maxing out to their \$2,800. And we thought it would be appropriate to raise that to \$3,600. It's a bill that's been brought to us by the Natural Resource Districts Association. I'm glad to carry this for them, because as you know, things get complicated. And with all the complicated issues we have that our natural resource districts had to deal with, the \$2,800 per year is proving to be inadequate. It's not a big raise. It's going from \$2,800 to \$3,600. I would ask for your consideration of this legislative bill.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Schrock. You've heard the opening on the advancement of LB 32. Open for discussion on that motion. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Members of the Legislature. Senator Schrock, I certainly have no objection to raising per diems in situations where the workload has increased significantly. And can you just briefly describe what workload...what the workload increase has been over the last few years? You're talking LB 962 and all the additional management responsibilities that they have in some districts, and their control over water, and that sort of thing?