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LB 32

hearing. There was some support, including the Association of Natural Resource Districts. But I know it was very close. And it's a contentious issue.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, Senator, you know, one person, one vote was a legal argument you could make two decades ago. And now, with all of the increased responsibilities, I'm guessing if somebody wanted to push it to the point of litigation, one person, one vote could be required of the NRDs. But I think that's totally unnecessary, and a waste of money, and something that we should be doing for ourselves now, because of the broad responsibilities of the NRDs. And this pay increase, which is something like 40 percent, if that represents the increase in the involvement of the NRDs in different types of regulatory schemes that the whole district pays for, that seems to me even more evidence that we should have one person, one vote, we should have it this year. And I'm not sure there should be any NRD bills until we get that straightened out.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Well, the pay increase is more in line of 30 percent. And I understand what you're saying, Senator Beutler. But there again, 97 percent of the...or 93 percent of the water is used by agriculture. And so...well, let me just say...let me say this. I'm proud to tell you, Senator Beutler, that about 18 of the 23 NRDs are pretty close to one person, one vote right now. So...and I think what I did hear in the hearing was that we don't need to push this; it's happening now. Will some of them ever get there? I don't know. As you know, the bill that I introduced is 1.5 to 1. And then we have a controversial issue of...a lot of the NRDs have two seats in one subdistrict. And so the language we proposed did not accommodate that. So we're working on it. And when the committee goes into Exec Session, it's one of the issues we're going to take up. We haven't swept it under the rug, if that's what you're driving at.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, Senator, I would simply note...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...that 2-3218 is the correct section of...