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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 217

then erase them with AM0614; or if we would defeat the committee amendments, then go directly to AM0614, which, based on what Senator Flood told us, will contain what is in the committee amendments. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Further discussion? Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, I understand that the committee amendments are not necessary and will be presented to us a second time with Senator Flood's following, ensuing amendment. However, the topics of the committee amendments are of some significant concern to me. I'm afraid that the way the issue was framed to you at the very beginning sets up a false premise, and the false premise is that storm water sewers in this bill, and what we're proposing to allow to be done in this bill, somehow relates to the controversy over storm water sewers in the other bill that most of us know now is still in the Natural Resources Committee. That bill is controversial not because it deals with storm water sewers, but because it proposes a method of assessment that is different from a straight property tax. It proposes to assess people on the basis of impervious surface, as opposed to a straight property tax, and therefore is controversial. You all are probably very aware that as a part of that controversy there has been a discussion about the federal requirements that are coming down with respect to enhanced storm water sewer facilities that are going to be necessary in Omaha and Lincoln and in first class cities now. One way or another, the cities are going to have to pay for that. They will pay for it with some sort of fee system, or they will pay for it with property taxes. That's...there aren't any other ways to pay for it. And the people who oppose the storm water sewer bill in the Natural Resources Committee are saying, no, we don't want the fees; pay for it with property taxes. Okay. That's all this bill is about. It's about paying for things with property taxes. So it's unrelated to that controversy. And if you're going to pay for the standard set of local improvements that are ordinarily paid for by property taxes, why in the world would you not allow a city to use this bonding method and some sort of joint agreement to facilitate the construction of these facilities