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FLOOR DEBATE

March 10, 2005      LB 217

SENATOR CUDABACK:      Senator Flood, you're recognized to open on AM0614 to LB 217.

SENATOR FLOOD:      Thank you, Mr. President and members. This amendment essentially makes some more changes that we worked on together with Senators Schimek and Chambers to kind of tighten the language up in the bill. One of the concerns, and I think it's a valid concern, is that you can have public agencies that don't necessarily have an electorate that's easily defined, for instance, an ag society or a county fair board, and a number of counties in Nebraska simply elect members of their board at its annual meeting and they can bring whoever they want to the meeting as long as they're registered voters in the county. That makes it difficult when you start making them participants in these kind of projects, because they're not organized as a political subdivision similar to a city, a county, a village, or an ESU, or community college. So, accordingly, the following public agencies are struck from the green copy, and they include county ag societies, county fair boards, joint airport authorities, city or county airport authorities, cemetery district, community redevelopment authority, drainage or levee district, historical society, irrigation district...NRDs were taken out from the committee amendment, as you might remember...nonprofit county historical association or society, public building commission, railroad transportation safety district, reclamation district, road improvement district, rural water district, township off-street parking district, transit authority. That's the list...Metropolitan Utilities District...that's the list that was taken out in this amendment and we've simply made the eligible participants cities; villages; municipal counties; community colleges; counties; educational service units; rural or suburban fire protection districts, which we heard more about yesterday; hospital districts; and SIDs. Those are the folks that can participate in this. Other than that, we took out the emergency clause in the amendment. We worked very closely with Richard Pedersen from Baird Holm Law Firm. He's an expert in bond counsel and provides services to cities across the state. He worked very closely with me on making this happen, so I feel that AM0614 represents the hard work of the Government Committee, together