TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office FLOOR DEBATE

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that laugh. I forgot about it, almost. In regard to this issue, this is extremely interesting to me for a couple of reasons. AM1334 I think makes an impact on a bill that needs to be discussed, and we may need something like this to happen. But what I would point out is that I think we need to exercise great caution in this area, and I'm going to elaborate on that in a moment. I think as you all know, we're going to be dealing, or it's quite possible that we could be dealing with a couple of natural gas service territory type of bills in the future. The whole issue is controversial, it's confusing. It's far-reaching in its scope, in that we have public, publicly owned utilities, huge in themselves, huge corporate interests, privately owned type of utilities, in themselves huge, powerful organizations, and there are many differences between what we're dealing with in discussing this broadband issue and the questions related to the natural gas...the natural gas issues. Many of the differences relate to transportation type of infrastructure. Local distribution companies, when it comes to natural gas, they're different, in that we're talking about, I believe, higher costs. We're also talking about...there's another difference. I think safety is a concern. I don't remember that, you know, we've heard of broadband blowing up in a particular town, or cities where we've had that type of issue occur. But there are some similarities, and many LDCs, or the local distribution companies, that are investor owned--similar to companies, I think, like Qwest, MCI, and the like, and the LDCs that are publicly owned, I guess, the MUDs and everything else, or the locally...the local government owned type of utilities, probably similar in a lot of ways to OPPD, NPPD, things like that. I believe these... I believe overall that these arguments should remain distinct, separate as much as possible. But that said, I think if publicly owned entities are promoted in their efforts to compete against privately owned entities, then we'll run into similarities that could create intense problems, could possibly create intense problems. We've got a situation with natural gas we can't get out of.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR FRIEND: And the reason is because we've got monopolies created all over the state. It's not a free market business.