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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR BEUTLER: I took you through the, kind of the basic principles of water use, oversimplifying somewhat, and I apologize to the many of you who know these things already. But there are a few people that don't deal with it that much who might have found that helpful, I hope. I want to move up in time with you to the year 1998. And I've passed a couple of things out to you that I think will inform you to a certain extent. One is the language from a 1998 bill which, you will see, in 1998, there was a bill in the Legislature that effectively said, there will be a moratorium in the Republican Valley from this date...from the active date...from the effective date of this bill forward. Okay? The situation was bad enough that informed people in this state well knew, in 1998, that there was trouble, big trouble, brewing. Now, Senator Schrock stands up and suggests that we have to be careful about how we talk about these things, because we're handing over things, legal arguments, to Kansas. Let me tell you, that was one of the biggest mistakes we made, was hushing up discussion of this whole thing because the lawyers convinced us we couldn't talk about any facts. That's how we got here, folks, and if you don't talk about it now, you'll be there again. And besides, the legal principles have been determined and, by and large, models will be applied and rules from the settlement agreement will be applied to determine whether we owe Kansas water or not, and nothing we're going to say about it is going to make a hill of beans of difference, in my opinion. In any event, I am committed to discussing this thing. And...well, I'm just repeating myself to say that part of the reason we missed the boat earlier is because there wasn't a broad enough discussion and a broad enough understanding of what we were being drawn into. Take a look at the water wells drilled in the Republican Basin over time. And I'm going to build on this chart and go back in time further than 1998. But you can see in the upper right-hand side, it takes in the time period of 1998 to 2005. And over on the left-hand side, you have the Lower Republican, which is the easternmost district; the Middle Republican, which is the middle district; and the Upper Republican, which is the westernmost district. Those are the three principal NRDs involved. There's another one called Tri-Basin, which is an anomaly in that it has a foot in each of