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FLOOR DEBATE

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the Republican River Valley, as it applies to the compact that we entered into on that. Senator Schrock has certainly worked long and hard on that issue; equally so has Senator Beutler. I think they both have the same end in mind, but they have different means to get to it. I value Senator Beutler raising the issue. As all of that unfolds, and as it is certainly topical and important to discuss, I don't want to fully lose sight of the underlying bill, LB 32. And that is a bill that I also support, and thank Senator Schrock for bringing. The natural resources district members on their board serve, and serve without pay. They are dedicated. They do a lot of work. I don't always agree individually with some of their votes or decisions, but I think they're very committed to what they do. They do spend time at meetings. And I know that some of them in attending these meetings max out at the amount of money that is capped for them to receive in reimbursement for attending meetings and their travel expenses. So currently the bill, LB 32, would increase that cap. They would go from, I believe it's \$2,800, to \$3,600; \$3,600 would be the maximum that they could receive in compensation. They'd still have to attend the meetings. They would still have to be engaged. And I think it's important that for somebody who's serving without pay, that at least there's some expense reimbursement. So as we have the discussion on Senator Beutler's AM1696 and the whole policy of what we do for reducing our consumption and usage of water, I don't want to overshadow or totally lose sight of the concept of taking care of the compensation to the NRD board members. They represent every one of us in one of the districts or another. The 23 that comprise the watersheds of the state of Nebraska are unique to Nebraska, and they do provide local control through those elected board positions. And those folks who serve from those communities serve because they believe in serving, they have an interest, they are committed and dedicated to serving on the natural resources district boards. And I don't recall when this particular cap was set, but I know that those board members reach that cap before the end of the year, and after that, they're not compensated for attending the meetings that they go to, particularly some of the more involved members who attend various subcommittees, committees, regular meetings, as well as other meetings to help educate and to keep them informed on issues that are before them. So it's a body that's