

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

January 25, 2006 LB 508

decommissioned in each district in relation to the total number of wells decommissioned in the state during the previous year. This can change year to year, but it's based on the number of wells decommissioned in each NRD district. The bill increases the maximum amount from \$300 to \$500 for the decommissioned wells, other than the hand-dug wells, to ensure the landowners can receive at least 60 percent of the cost-share. This allows for increased costs of decommissioning since the program was established ten years ago. Under the bill, a local natural resource district could establish maximum cost-share assistance amounts that will be provided to the landowners for decommissioning water wells based on the well's depth, the diameter, and to ensure the landowners will be compensated for at least 60 percent of the cost of well decommissioning. It would also allow districts to account for the cost differential of properly closing different size well. It was advanced to General File unanimously. I have decommissioned wells on my place and every time we do that it costs the landowner money. But if we didn't cost-share in this, we probably wouldn't be decommissioning a lot of wells, and I think it's appropriate that the state share in that. But keep in mind, this is not necessarily a state-funded program. It's funded by your NRD's property tax and by a \$3 fee on each new well. It's been a good program, a successful program. We need to continue it. And with the cost of everything going higher, we need to increase that, our...the NRD's portion, so that they can go from \$300 per decommissioned well to \$500. If you have any questions, I will try and answer them. It's a fairly straightforward bill. It's a good program. We need to continue it. We're just updating the quantity of money that the NRDs can cost-share with. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Schrock. You've heard the opening on LB 508. Mr. Clerk, amendment, please.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Beutler would offer FA77.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature,