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LB 1249

and it is inappropriate to have duplicate pipes. But what I'm hearing, my information says that that problem was resolved with LB 78. So when you talk about putting territories on utilities so there are no duplicate pipes, that's admirable; but again, I would suggest to you that the situation has been resolved through LB 78. And also, the next time I speak I want to talk about the fact that we're putting utilities, or excuse me, if we put territories on utilities, there is a value to having an exclusive territory. And the way I read this bill, we're not assessing any charge for that value, and if we're going to say that there's no competition, that these territories are where they are, it just...to me, it's logical to think that there's some value in having an exclusive area. And as I understand it, some states have assigned value to those exclusive territories through a taxing policy, and I don't read that in here. Senator Friend, Senator Landis are certainly far more knowledgeable than I am regarding this issue. My specific concern is...

SENATOR BAKER: One minute.

SENATOR BOURNE: ...all of my district is taken up by consumers who utilize the Metropolitan Utilities District. I'm afraid that their rates will rise because of the passage of this bill. That's my opinion. The next thing that Senator Landis talked about is obtaining permission from the PSC before placing pipes in the ground, and again, that makes sense. But what I would suggest to you is that problem is also resolved, as I understand it. MUD has a policy of sending letters to Aquila each time that they are going to place pipes in the ground in a new subdivision, and they don't, as I understand it, they do not place the pipes in the ground until Aquila has had an opportunity to object. So they are being proactive in trying to address the very concerns, the legitimate concerns raised by Senator Landis, by sending a letter to Aquila saying,...

SENATOR BAKER: Time.

SENATOR BOURNE: ...we're going to do this.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Senator Bourne. Senator Thompson.