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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 1249

section--and that is the authority for boundary setting--upon the board of directors, and which board? MUD board. So to review: The authority and power to set boundaries conferred in this section upon the MUD board members shall extend as far beyond the corporate limits of the metropolitan utilities district as the board may deem necessary. You cannot have the total power to go anywhere you want by board action and be limited. There's a reason why they don't want to do this, however, because when you use this exercise, you have to do natural gas and water, and you got to let them vote. What we got in Sarpy County is where MUD can service people only with natural gas, doesn't have to give them water, and doesn't have to let them vote. Now I confess, LB 1249 has some restraining authority on that respect, just like LB 78 does. But as far as MUD cannot grow with the city, you hear that phrase, this is their existing authority, and it is remained unchanged. MUD can go anywhere it wants to, not by asking permission, but by board direction. That's existing law, unchanged. Let's not hear again, MUD can't expand with the city. They can. They just have to let people be voters, and they have to provide them with a full range of services when they do. Third argument: We want to have competition. This kills competition. Excuse me? I never said that; putting words in my mouth. Competition works in an open marketplace where you have free entry and free exit. It doesn't work in monopolies. Do you have competition in monopolies? And the answer is no, you don't. I never said that we wanted to have big competitive fights. Now we have allowed competition to some extent. It's called a certified marketer. But with respect to competition for laying down pipes in the ground, no; for putting up electric lines, no. One is enough. Digging up my front lawn, once would be enough. You know why? That's the kind of a problem that you want to avoid. Here's the Gretna Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department. With the rapid growth in Sarpy County, I've heard of other fire jurisdictions in the 911 emergency dispatch personnel show uncertainty over whom to contact in the event the natural gas company needs to be called. Phone calls have to be made to both MUD and Aquila to determine who has service in the area. Recently, we responded to a call where a vehicle accident, Interstate 80, went through a fence, hit a gas meter, breaking it off. MUD was called, responded in a timely manner. However, it was found that