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FLOOR DEBATE

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in this case it was appropriate and beneficial. Senator Louden, if we don't do this and there continues to be problems in the western part of the state and the southwest part of the state, they're going to continue to come for the Legislature and ask for General Funds. This will help mitigate that if we have future problems. They can raise the funds themselves. And I can tell you, it's not fun to come to this legislative body and ask for money for water. It's tough. But the body has been cooperative and I think we've appropriated a reasonable amount of money to help solve our water problems in that part of the state. But we also have to have a self-help program, and that's the reason for the taxing, the recommendations for the levy increase, and I would remind you it is a recommendation by the Water Policy Task Force and that task force is highly made up of irrigators and they went along with this. They said, we need this, we need the revenue source. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Schrock. Senator Louden, there are no further lights on. You're recognized to close.

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. As Senator Schrock pointed out, the Water Task Force are the ones that thought this was a good idea and they agreed with it. You want to remember most of those were irrigators and that sort of thing. How about your local car dealers and some of other area people that aren't in the farming business, that sure they benefit from irrigation to a certain extent, but there's also a lot of that country out there that isn't irrigated. Not all of the economy in an area comes from irrigation. I agree that a lot of it does. It increases the value on some of the property, but the percentage of property in a lot of those NRD districts that is irrigated is very small compared to the percentage of property that is out there that doesn't have anything to do with irrigation. So when you put the...put it on the property tax, sure, that's everyone in there is going to have to foot the bill. The problem came up through the way the wells were drilled. There are probably too many. Some of those areas are fully appropriated; some of them probably aren't. Some of them, after a model is done, may find out that they do have a recharge rate at the rate that they are pumping. For the most part, some of the Republican River deal, that mostly is