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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 1226

drainage and it's all over how much water is going down the Republican River. It hasn't been shown yet that pumping is what caused that river to completely dry up, whether it's conservation and other measures taken. I think with coming back to the Legislature for money and giving them a way to do it, the question was raised early on about user fees on pumping the water. These people are already doing a user fee amongst themselves. The NRDs are setting up instances where people can trade their amount of water that they still have in reserve for the next year to another irrigation field, to another field. They're also setting it up where they can trade it to a neighboring farmer. And there have already been instances that, my understanding, that...been paid as much as \$5 an acre-inch for water from another irrigation system. So there is a price out there for user fees. I think some of that has to be studied a little bit more closely. When it goes at that angle, there would probably be a difference in who pays for it. It wouldn't be a blanket taxes on everybody in the area. You want to remember, when you look at that map that I handed out, there's about three or four of us that represent that whole area out there, and yet, there's 23 NRDs. So you're voting a tax on just a few people, few parts of a large area of Nebraska, but a smaller population base. So I guess it's whether or not there's a fairness and you want to vote a property tax on somebody else, and that's what it amounts to. When you get at that level, I think the NRD here in Lincoln is at 4 cents. What are they going to do when they get to their levy limit? Are they going to want to come and want the same thing, that they can raise their property tax another 3 cents? So I think you ought to be very careful about giving any entity authority to raise their tax levy. I think you'll be opening up a Pandora's box. I think this is something that we want to stay out of. I voted against it when it was amended into the...into the bill from Natural Resources into LB 1226. But this is a bill that came out of the Revenue Committee and found its way clear into the Natural Resources Committee bill.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR LOUDEN: With that, I would urge you to carefully decide, are you for or against property taxes? If you are