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FLOOR DEBATE

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There are two types of things we need to do. We need to have easement mechanisms that can take land out of use on a year-by-year basis and allow it to be in use on another year, depending on whether there's...depending on rainfall, basically. And this sort of mechanism then would allow the Department of Water Resources to moderate the use of water from year to year. The second thing that we need to do is to take some land out of water use permanently. There is no way, no one has ever said that there's any way we can do this thing without taking land out of water use, short of transferring land...transferring water from another basin, and that has never been shown to be a practical idea. So the type of easement that is before you today can be used for both of those purposes. It's called a perpetual easement, but that simply means that the easement itself is in effect and ongoing. But what you can put in a perpetual easement is a provision by which the Department of Water Resources in a particular year may allow a use. So...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...I think that you can get the purpose...both purposes solved. That is, you can have an easement that works to take land in and out of use, water use, on a year-by-year basis, but the continuing control is in government, so that we can moderate and adjust to the Kansas agreement. And to the extent that we need to take land out of use permanently, the easement can also be used for that purpose. And we will have to do that one way or another, whether we make outright purchase, or through conservation easements. So in light of the deepening problem, now illustrated by the result of the third year water usages, the report on the third year of water usage, it's even more incumbent upon us that we get a handle on this as soon as possible. And getting this...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time, Senator.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...tool out there, even if it's not perfect at this particular point in time,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time, Senator Beutler.