

your names right. Will you please stand and be recognized, class. Senator Don Eret also has guests under the South balcony, Rodney Anderson and Stan Meyer of Geneva. Would you please stand. Thank you. Now, Senator Kahle.

SENATOR KAHLE: Well, Mr. President and members, there are many times when I sit and listen to the debates in this body that I feel I might as well sit and listen because I don't know much about it, but when it comes to water and water recharge and this sort of an operation, I feel that I am qualified to speak on the subject having irrigated now for 49 years and also been involved with the recharge situation to the south of us caused by the Tri-County system. I feel that 198 is a step in the right direction as a bill and will certainly support it whether you support my amendment or not. The problem is that if we do not provide some funding for 198 it is not going to accomplish very much and I would like to read to you a little bit, an excerpt from a letter, and this is from Frank Dragoun who is the Director of the Tri-County Basin. He says, "Having represented our area of Nebraska on state and regional ground water studies and conferences, I know it is important that LB 198 include at least a minimal fee for beneficial use of recharged ground water. Our area and the State of Nebraska needs to quantify and properly document with water rights all of the land using ground water recharge from surface irrigation projects. Without a fee there is no way to pay the engineering studies and administrative costs to obtain these water rights. Furthermore, it is only fair that costs of operating and maintaining a surface irrigation project should be shared by all those receiving benefits." And it goes on to say, "The problem of quantifying the water right is most acute in the North Platte, South Platte, and Platte Rivers. Nebraska has and is having problems receiving our share of the water from Colorado and Wyoming. If water rights or ground water recharge from surface projects are obtained without even a minimal fee, Wyoming and Colorado could very well argue that the water rights are only paper water rights to be used against the upstream states. Indeed the irrigation acres receiving water are receiving a benefit, there ought to be a fee associated with the benefit received." And I have a number of other communications. I won't bore you with all of them but we certainly I think feel that we need some fees attached to or fees that will be allowable and that you cannot operate this situation without funding. I have another letter from a Russell Edeal who has been involved in farming and all kinds of water services in Nebraska. He says, "I encourage you to support LB 198 and an amendment to allow a fee for recharge use and service. As an observer of state water needs and funding