

with Senator Schmit that there are things in this bill that probably need to be looked at and possibly changed as we discuss it but I have kind of a feeling that there is some sort of a backlash in this Legislature that really are not sold on this approach, that they probably want to do it some other way and I guess I would like to know what other way because we are established with NRD districts. We are moving forward. We have passed legislation that has given them some authority. I would sure hate to see us scuttle this now and then try to come up with something else. I just do not think it will work. Thank you.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Thank you. The Chair recognizes Senator Cullan and then Senator Burrows. Senator Cullan.

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I am glad that we are having this opportunity to discuss this bill and there are several very important aspects of the bill and I appreciate very much Senator Schmit's desire to have all aspects of this bill discussed and so I will address some of them and I think some of the reasons that I personally, as a member of the Public Works Committee, supported LB 26, there was one section in the bill that I wanted to change in committee, Senator Schmit, that had to do with taxes and I would have preferred a water use tax but the committee did not agree with that and I don't think most people here agree with that. So with that one exception I do support the provisions as I understand them, of LB 26. As Senator Kremer said it is a fine tuning of LB 577, the groundwater management act passed a few years ago, and the state is indeed lucky that prior to the time that people started to reacting to water problems with a good deal of excitement, that this Legislature had the wisdom to pass LB 577 with the leadership of Senator Kremer and Senator Schmit and also to establish the NRD's to see that that is controlled locally. Now to address some of the specific provisions of LB 26 and why I believe they are important. I think one of the major changes and one of the most important changes is on the first page where we expand the authority of an NRD and give them one additional criteria for establishing a control area and that is dewatering of an aquifer. Senator Kremer can more eloquently explain what dewatering of an aquifer is but it is my understanding that dewatering of an aquifer causes permanent damage to that aquifer and so it must be avoided. It is very important that that be avoided so I think that is an important consideration. It has been demonstrated to the Public Works Committee to the unanimous consent of the members of that committee that this additional