

March 9, 1979

LB 359

the water conservation act program went out of existence by operation of law on July 1st, 1978. The funding for disposition of the funds has only been since July, 1978. This is less than eight months history. I am strongly opposed to what LB 359 is trying to do. I ask your assistance in indefinitely postponing this bill.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Schmit, as the Chairman of the committee introducing the bill, to speak next and then in this order, Senator Keyes, Senator Sieck, Senator Nichol, Senator Rumery, Senator DeCamp, Senator Cullan, in that order.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, members of the Legislature,

PRESIDENT: Senator Dworak is on, too, now.

SENATOR SCHMIT: If you will study the budget bill, you will find that the appropriation recommendation is listed under one fund. I did not speak directly to the Governor about the issue but there was no specific individual appropriation made to the conservation fund. It was my understanding, I repeat it, that the commission may divide the fund as they see fit. Now the question is, whether we shall spend money for development projects or for individual projects on individual landowners. I am going to ask you this question. How much soil conservation do you really perform with \$20,000 per NRD? They built ten dams, 31,000 feet of terraces, a dozen reuse pits or something like that. I want to tell you this. Up in Columbus, Nebraska, there is a manufacturing company called the Fleischer Manufacturing Company cooperated with the University of Nebraska on the development of a minimum tillage planter. One farmer using a minimum tillage planter on his farm will save more soil and water, in my estimation, and I think I know what I am talking about because I use them, will save more soil and water than the entire \$20,000 allocation will to a Natural Resource District. The Lower Elkhorn, a Natural Resource District, very wisely set aside 30,000 acres of their Natural Resource District where they tried to encourage the utilization of the minimum tillage planter as a soil conservation measure. It's a good idea but that is a measure that a farmer can do by himself. Now I have the amount of money that was paid to the various people out of that fund. It varied from \$199 to one individual to a high of \$12,284.72 for another. I have no objection the way those funds were spent. I am sure they were well spent. What I am objecting to is this. Is it more equitable to make individual payments in the amounts as great as