

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 146 was a bill introduced by the Public Works Committee. Senator Beutler, are you going to go ahead with this one?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Yes.

CLERK: (Read title.) The bill was originally read on January 14th, referred to the Public Works Committee for hearing, the bill was advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments pending by the Public Works Committee, Mr. President.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Beutler, are you going to handle the committee amendments?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Yes. Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, this bill has to do almost exclusively with groundwater pollution and giving NRD's authority to set up control areas in situations where there is or is reasonably expected to be or to have groundwater pollution problems. Right now I will just be talking about the committee amendments, but, let me say to you that the committee amendments have the overall effect of making the regulations contained in 146, the provisions of 146 generally less severe. So unless you are in favor of severe pollution, groundwater pollution controls, then you'll probably react favorably to the committee amendments. Just to refresh the memory of those who do not deal with water problems day in and day out, our state, as you may know is divided up into 24 Natural Resource Districts and each one of those NRD's has a local autonomy by and large in how it deals with groundwater problems, in how it deals with Natural Resource problems and in particular how it deals with groundwater problems. The exclusive control of groundwater in the State of Nebraska lies with the local NRD's. The first . . . one of the first authorities that they were given was to set up control areas where water quantity was a problem. In that regard it is required that they initiate a hearing and then there is a hearing before the Director of Water Resources and the Director of Water Resources approves or disapproves the setting up of a control area. That's with regard to groundwater quantity problems. With 146 generally we are talking about using the same system, the same set up, the same frame work, and proceeding to give the NRD's power to deal with situations that involve groundwater pollution as opposed to groundwater quantity problems. That is the general thrust of 146. Now going back again to the committee amendments, they make the provisions of the original 146 less severe. They do that in a number of ways. First of all they modify the original definition of groundwater pollution which was in the bill to a definition which is less expensive. Secondly, they delete