

March 5, 1982

LB 577

or increase the cigarette tax so we can get a million or two here to build some kind of a water project. This would not impinge upon that but I happen to believe very strongly that if we are going to really capture surface water, then this body is going to have to take the leadership because many projects of any worthwhile nature are going to have to be rather significant, and to build those structures today as you know is a very costly endeavor and so this would merely provide the Legislature advice and counsel of the general public when they say to us we believe that if we are going to capture the water that annually leaves this state to any great degree, then there is going to have to be significant structures built in this state identified by geological surveys as to where the greater advantage would be. Now the Legislature then, once the people advise and counsel us that they believe it is important, then it is up to us through the various agencies we have that deal with water to identify those priority areas and to get at the business of capturing this water. You have all heard the figures like I have. I have heard them every year since I have been here. It is estimated that on the average we lose eight million acre feet of water and we only retain of that eight about one million. I hear this every day when I sit in the Public Works Committee and I read it through the World Herald articles and many other things. So what I am saying to us is let the people advise us through this constitutional amendment and see whether or not they believe it is important as we might think it is important and so that is the reason I am offering the constitutional amendment. I ask for the adoption of LB 577.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Kremer.

SENATOR KREMER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members. I rise to support Senator Koch with his idea on LB 577. I have here on my desk and I am willing to share with any of you that wish to see the latest printout of what we learned when the study council of the Ogallala aquifer met in Dallas just day before yesterday. Throughout the morning session you heard this phrase repeated over and over again, we have these problems, we have these problems all except Nebraska. That phrase kept coming out all morning long simply because Nebraska does have the resource if they will take care of it and that involves the impoundment of some of the water that is getting away from us. If we do not, we are going to have the same problem the states south of us do. Now we can delay somewhat but down the line we are going to have them, too, in some areas of the state, not all areas. I think Senator Koch has an excellent idea in some way if we are going to impound this resource in