

greater. They are not a special use district which is the basis on which the court upheld the present election system. If a special use district is what you're talking about, you don't have to have one man, one vote, equal representation. But are NRD special use districts, are they waste water treatment districts or what have you that are very specific in terms of what they do? No, they are not. They are very broad. They deal with water. They deal with land. They deal with all our natural resources. They now have much financing authority in addition to property tax levies. They have the ability to issue bonds now, recently, a couple of years ago. This financing authority has broadened over the years. They now are able to regulate recreation areas and have police powers over the use of these recreation areas. More and more things have been added to the Christmas tree known as the NRDs. These additions have provided more powers to them, give them a more broader scope to deal with the different concerns that they are to address and as a result I don't think they can be defined as special use districts anymore. Now when we changed the system to allow women to vote, when we changed the system to allow blacks and minorities to vote, when we changed the system to allow us to vote directly for senators, when we allowed all citizens whether they were property owners or not to vote, we could have said at that time, well, things are going pretty good, why change them. The issue of equal representation and equal opportunity to vote and participate in our democracy is an issue that transcends all questions about whether these NRDs are working or not working, doing their job or not doing the job. That is a peripheral issue. The question here is equal representation and adequate representation and we do not have either right now in our NRD election system and as a result many of us are considering the court action to follow up on what happened in 1975 because this Legislature I think in a few moments will vote, undoubtedly, to reject this bill. It's done it in the past. It will continue to do so. Your lack of recognition of the problem and the lack of initiative to deal with it is going to end up eventually forcing action through the courts and I think the courts will eventually force this Legislature to do what has to be done to do the right thing. That is unfortunate. I'd like to see this Legislature recognize the fact that all people in this state have an equal right to be represented on NRDs, that all citizens whether urban or rural have an equal interest in NRDs, that all citizens from whatever walk of life have an