

SENATOR RUPP: LB 569 is a rather simple concept. The language is lifted verbatim from Section 79-462 which dealt with absence on school boards. It simply says, rather than dealing with school boards it would now deal with Natural Resource District Boards of Directors and Public Power District Boards, simply says the board member misses two consecutive meetings or is absent from the district 60 consecutive days they would be removed from the board unless the remainder of the board voted otherwise. I know your first inclination is to let the electorate decide in these matters and I think that works pretty well with a poor board member in something like a city council or county supervisors or for that matter this Legislature. I think if we were absent for a month at a time it would not go unnoticed by the electorate, but I think there is some public offices that tend to somewhat slip through the cracks as far as the attention of the electorate is concerned. I think Natural Resource Districts is the first one that comes to mind and of course since we are unique being a totally public power state I added those more or less as an afterthought. This idea began with my experience when I worked for Game and Parks Commission, worked closely with several NRDs and I want to emphasize that a lot of the members, the Board of Directors do a very good job, but some NRDs have a few members that consistently lose interest after they are elected and they don't attend many meetings. I saw an awful lot of this in my working with them and a reason why this happens I think is that according to Senator Wesely's poll that he took, some research he did on another NRD bill a couple years ago, about 75 percent of the time we have a Board of Director for an NRD running unopposed and if you don't have that attention of the electorate and no opposition why you tend to lose enthusiasm when going to meetings. I discussed this with several NRD managers and you'll notice in the bill book, if you're interested, that power districts and the NRDs did sign off on this bill and testified in favor. There was no opposition. They simply view this as a tool for them. I'm not naive enough to think this will dramatically increase the attendance at board meetings, what have you, but some of these groups will be able to use this as a tool to painlessly remove a colleague that has not done a very good job and at the recent NARD conference two of them told me of members that they had on their board, one that hadn't been to a meeting in a year and one that hadn't been to a meeting for three years that were both recently re-elected. This would be a painless way for