

protecting, without question, the supply to cities and villages. But within that mile area there could be...could very well be a goodly number of rural residents that would be affected. I think while we are mindful of numbers, we need to also be mindful of our rural people. I know there are varying circumstances that deal with the rural areas right now. But it seems to me like we are completely forgetting them here with this piece of legislation. I have some further questions, Mr. President. I'm going to leave my light on, but they do deal with the bill as a whole. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Is there further discussion on the Eret amendment? Senator Vickers.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President, members, I, too, have some concerns similar to Senator Carsten. Senator Eret mentioned awhile ago that the percentage of the people living in the rural areas was declining, and he used the term endangered species. That is a good term. I would remind you that we've done just exactly the opposite with endangered species if they be not of the Homo sapien variety, that is that we protect those endangered species even more than we protect those species that aren't endangered. Since it seems to me that Senator Eret is exactly correct in saying that the rural residents are almost an endangered species, then putting in a mechanism that says we are going to protect the water supply system of the other 80 percent more than we protect it of that endangered species is going just exactly the opposite for the Homo sapien variety of endangered species. I don't necessarily agree with that. I don't think that simply because we are an endangered species means that we are somehow second class citizens and that our water supply system that our families drink can be closer than the water supply system that some other Nebraska residents may be drinking the water from. Senator Eret has a good point in that the entire bill, and we all need to understand that, that we are setting up a regulation system over a situation that is in fact occurring and, in my opinion, will probably continue to occur. But he is also correct when he says that we've got the potential for accidents, anything that is man-made, be it a check valve or whatever, obviously can malfunction and that he is also correct when he says that new equipment is coming on line. The fact of the matter is, however, a lot of those people simply can't afford that new equipment and they are going to continue to use the