

of ground water by nitrates. There has been a lot of conversation about it, a lot of publicity and so the principal focus of this bill was in that direction. After the DEC has taken these previous steps the district, the NRD district, would hold a hearing on the action plan and then submit the plan to DEC. If the Department of Environmental Control adopts the plan or ask for revisions in the plan, if there are no revisions that are necessary and it is adopted, then the NRD proceeds. If they do not approve the NRD plan, the Department of Environmental Control can make its own plan and carry out the enforcement of that plan. So in effect, if the local NRD does not act or does not act in agreement with the Department of Environmental Control, then the DEC can come in and carry out their own action plan. During the introduction and drafting of this bill I think we tried very diligently to place minimum burdens upon agriculture and business and still recognize that a problem could exist and that there should be in place a mechanism...

SENATOR MARSH: Fifteen seconds.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...to address this problem. I want to emphasize once more that this bill is only one of a number of bills we have on the floor this session and that we have passed, in the past, to address the problem of ground water quality. I want to emphasize one more point, if the Chairman will allow me to do so, and that is this, that if it were not for the creation of Natural Resource Districts more than 15 years ago, if it were not for the creation of the Department of Environmental Control more than 15 years ago, we would not now have in place the methods and the mechanisms whereby we can deal with ground water contamination and so when people say the Nebraska Legislature hasn't done enough on protecting our ground water, I challenge that statement and I just want to say once again that this bill is a cooperative effort between myself, Senator Beutler, Senator Hefner and many others who have recognized that there might be a problem and we're trying to address it and I would hope that the bill would be advanced. I'd be glad to answer any questions, if you have any.

SENATOR MARSH: Senator Rod Johnson.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Madam President, members of the body, I rise to support Senator Schmit's efforts through LB 894.