

brought these amendments to you, 2619 directs that districts shall develop rules and regulations. That places it at the local control and makes it mandatory. I'm going to offer a substitute amendment for that, which is filed later down the road, which makes it not mandatory but gives them the option to because I think sometimes local people must take control of their own destiny and must take control of their own groundwater quality and simply cannot wait for national state actions. The second amendment designated that the Department of Health shall develop and implement rules and regulations for groundwater quality. And the third one directs the Environmental Control Council to do that. They are currently working on such rules and regulations. But that has been a point of contention in the agricultural community in particular, and there has been some concern about who should develop these and should we aspire to certain health standards. That's been a problem and a point of contention for a number of years, particularly on the nitrate issue. It seems to me the reason we have environmental laws is because of our concern with health. If we weren't concerned with health, I don't think we'd have environmental laws. And so there may be a very compelling argument given for placing that entire responsibility with the Health Department in the State of Nebraska. We have, however, in Nebraska, given that authority to the Environmental Control Council and I would hope that they would move in that direction and continue the work that they have begun. But I think that is an issue that we will have to address again next year. It needs to be worked out among the various levels of government to figure out who is going to do what, and at the same time not delay this so long that we seriously jeopardize our current high quality of water and at the same time that we can stop some of the serious problems that are already occurring, particularly with the nitrate contamination. So, with that little bit of comment, I will withdraw those amendments.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Scofield would move to amend. And, Senator, this is the one you filed with me this morning, I believe 2849. (The Scofield amendment appears on pages 1910-11 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This one I'm serious about, folks. This one raises the issue of who should be responsible for groundwater quality in the state, and what kinds of activities can we take right now to protect our groundwater quality. This amendment states...it is very similar to the one that I withdrew, 2619, if you are following it in the Journal,