

form, has been agreed to by industry, consumers, businesses, and all of those concerned. And I would ask you, at this time, to let the bill stay in its present state, try it out for a year or two. If there is any tinkering or changes to be made, we will be in a better position to make those changes a year or two down the road than we are now. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Scofield, you may close.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you. I appreciate Senator Schmit's comments on this, and I appreciate the hard work he has done on this bill, and also Senator Sieck's remarks. I would like to make just a few points on this sort of thing and this issue. As Senator Chronister has accurately pointed out, this issue has been before us for some time. The public is becoming very impatient with the Legislature's unwillingness to address this issue and move to where I believe the public is. And I think right now the public is ahead of lawmaking bodies on what they expect. I think that is perhaps best illustrated by that petition drive, the clean water petition drive which is going on in this state right now and which originated in my district. We are behind what the public wants. We have not responded quickly enough to address these problems. We keep saying let's wait and see what works, and next year we'll work it out and we'll have hearings. And it is important that we do this correctly. But I think we have what I find to be a rather frightening precedent that I don't want to see occur again. We're spending a lot of time on Initiative 300 because the public became impatient with our ability to deal with that issue. The public, I believe, is becoming equally impatient with our ability and our willingness to address this issue. And this issue is difficult because everybody wants to use the water and many people have competing interests. In fact, I ran across a saying awhile ago that said whiskey is for drinking, but water is for fighting over. And I think some of the things that we've done in Nebraska certainly illustrate that. And I would suggest to you that, as water becomes more sought after and more polluted, that that fight will gain in intensity. We have an opportunity to do something about that now. We have an opportunity to give some local control if a local area wishes to take their own destiny in their own hands and resolve some of those fights right now. This issue allows them to do that. I guess I've listened to Senator Schmit a long time on this floor, and I'm going to quote him. I'd like a little less sympathy on this issue and a few more votes. So I would appreciate your help in advancing this amendment. Thank you.