

whatever, technically are they doing that legally? And I suspect the answer in a technical perspective may be they're doing it illegally. Where I'm concerned is that this...this amendment I have takes care of one specific area that's very, very small in amount of water. If we go to the direction that you're talking about and all of agriculture, at some point, needs to come back and get a permit, will they also each have to have their own hydrological study at their cost to show what effect it would or would not have, what effect that would have, how much it would cost, what would the result be, and I'm not sure we want to set that precedent here today at this point on that particular issue. That's...that's where...that's where my concerns would be at that point.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Well, Senator, I appreciate what you're saying, and I understand it, it's just that we happen to be in different areas of the state where the amount of water that's available is certainly a lot different. And my concern then comes back to the fact that if one user is able to...and I don't understand exactly how much of an effect that somebody might take out in the area where I live, where there is a very limited amount of water, how much effect it would have on the people who live there. And that's my concern.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Yes, Senator...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Senator Vrtiska, I may, and again I could use my time, but one of the things I would like to, if you can take some time, or I'll give you some of my time is, right now in your area what protection do people have from people withdrawing water now?

SENATOR VRTISKA: I...I guess I don't have an answer for that, I'm sorry.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: That's...that's because there is none, there is none. And that's why I think what...the direction that you're going, though it makes sense, to some degree, if carried out, will really take us in a wrong direction. There is no protection now. We...I don't think we want to get into that issue on this particular amendment on this bill. Those are issues that we do need to cover, but it's got to be at a different time when we have better information and a broader