

But for individuals who don't happen to meet that criteria, that happen to be the small, little entrepreneurs who go out, make their investments and then, come to find out, maybe they should have done it ahead of time, but come to find out that they are at the back of the line, so to speak, for purposes of the one thing that they need in order for their operation to be successful is a very minor amount of water in the vast majority of the areas of the state. I recognize the issue that some areas of the state may...may be in for a limited period of time during the year. And those are reflected, I think, in the very water law that we have in this state that is, frankly, some of the best in the country. And it is a...a...an issue here in the Bernard-Stevens amendment that does not pierce that armor of protecting the priority uses of the water resources throughout the state. It says only that if you use less than 200 feet...acre feet of water, you don't have to go through the permit process. Right now it's 3,000, or you wait until the back of the line. And it is only for golf courses. We have, I think, approximately 180 of those in the state, at present, somewhere in that ballpark figure. The vast majority of those tend to be in and around urban areas, but more and more of them are in outlying areas. And they do not, as Senator Horgan pointed out, need large amounts of water in order to operate, they need very minor, small, in proportion to agricultural usage for the...the size of acreage that we're talking about, 50 to 80 acres, depending on what the...the layout of the course is, and it is minute compared to what...the same amount of ground if it was in production, agriculture would use if they were pumping irrigated ground. That's not the case here. You're asking for a waiver, basically, to the law that says if you're pumping less than 200-acre feet, for purposes of a golf course, and only for a golf course, you don't have to apply. It's something that I think is, in terms of in their eyes, the little people who operate these, it is a fairness issue.

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR HALL: It is something that they're asking government to respond to them on. They're saying, yeah, we're not asking you to throw out your entire water law system. We're just saying, make an exception for us so that we have the ability to come out here and provide enjoyment, entertainment, recreation for people who want to use our facilities. This is not a huge issue. It is being blown out of proportion, and I think that the Bernard-Stevens amendment will rectify a very small, very minor