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Deciding to assess higher taxes on their irrigators and property owners was a drastic move, but a necessary one on their part because the state turned its back on them and basically said, "sink or swim."

So now the dust is starting to settle on LB 701. Good corn prices, welcome rains and planting season have eased the tension for the time being. Many farmers feel that with \$3.40 per bushel corn the new tax burden

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"The latest map prepared by the US Geological Survey which shows groundwater level changes over a fifty-year period reveals that there have been draw downs in Nebraska, but only in four counties (Perkins, Chase, Dundy and Box Butte). In these counties, the local NRDs have taken appropriate regulatory action to address the declines."

"The map shows that overall in Nebraska, groundwater level increases actually exceed groundwater declines. This is contrary to what is reported in the state's major newspapers. In reality, there is no statewide crisis."

"One thing we do in this state better than anyone else

can be handled. And if it means we get in compliance, and that current water use allocations are not reduced, the looming crisis has maybe been averted. God only knows, we hope so. But, DNR Director Ann Bleed has on more than one occasion said that further reductions in allocations are likely. What we are counting on is the promise Governor Heineman has made to bring Kansas back to the table to negotiate new and reasonable terms for compliance that fully account for drought, as well as the impacts of conservation measures and riparian vegetation.

in the world is produce food. Our farmers and ranchers excel at this. Therefore, wherever possible in areas of our state with no water shortage problems we need to develop our productive land to the maximum extent. Choking off new development for no rational reason is bad state policy."

"LB 594 would put a big "Closed For Business" sign up in parts of our state that should remain wide open for new development."

"LB 594 strikes directly at the heart of local control and violates the rules of the game prescribed in LB 962 (2004). There is no rational or scientific basis for adopting LB 594."

The NRC killed LB 594 on March 9, 2007.

OUTSTANDING QUOTES

"Suppose the policy-makers at the turn of the 20th century had decided to 'preserve' the environment as it was before America was discovered. Had government been enlightened then, as it seems to be now, and prohibited mining, oil drilling, grazing and logging, would the world be a better place? Those who drive public policy today seem to think so."

"Future generations will easily see that current efforts to save the bull trout, or the loco weed, or any of the 2,000 obscure species on agency lists, is a thinly veiled and often ridiculous excuse to get ownership or control of land into the hands of government or a surrogate 'land trust' organization."

- Henry Lamb, Sovereignty International

"So how will we meet the ever-increasing demand for water in the West? Improved conservation and efficiency by urban and agricultural water users is certainly part of the solution, but only part. It's simply ludicrous to believe that conservation alone will supply enough water

for the tens of millions of new residents expected to arrive in Western cities during the coming decades."

"For some, the answer is to regard agriculture as 'the reservoir' that will provide all the water necessary to meet urban and environmental needs. Water currently used for agriculture can be freed up for other uses by buying out farmers or forcing them to surrender their supplies through regulatory means. Best of all, some will say, this water can be 'developed' without building dams. This approach will destroy irrigated agriculture in the West."

-Dan Keppen, Family Farm Alliance

"Battles over water in the West are always about something more. At their most elemental, they are about survival."

-Bettina Boxall, Los Angeles Times

"There is too little public recognition of how much we all depend upon farmers as stewards of our soil, water and wildlife resources."

-John F. Kennedy