

***By Russ Pankonin***

***The Imperial Republican***

The Upper Republican Natural Resources District (URNRD) will not ask for property taxes for their 2010-11 budget.

That means more than \$1 million collected as a special levy under LB 701 will go back into the pockets of taxpayers in the district.

After LB 701 passed in 2007, NRDs in the Republican River Basin were allowed to assess a special 10-cent levy to help with compact compliance issues with Kansas. That tax was ultimately ruled unconstitutional by the Nebraska Supreme Court.

State statutes provided no legal way to refund the taxes collected under the property tax levy so NRDs have been holding the money in escrow.

An effort to get a refund procedure passed during this year's legislative session failed.

Now, the URNRD budget committee has opted to not collect property taxes in next year's budget. Instead, they plan to use the \$1.137 million in escrow for operations next year.

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