

February 27, 1974

SENATOR SYAS: I just wanted to ask you a question. If you are going to tell them the costs, that they shouldn't back up.

SENATOR ANDERSON: There is a cost figure in this thing. And we're talking about probably on the order of \$20,000 to match the federal money that is available. What I would like to do if we do advance the bill today is to ask that it be bracketed until we can get an exact figure worked out. I'm working with the Fiscal Analyst Staff on this right now to find out exactly what is needed. O.K. well I'll go ahead and explain the bill. The bill basically commits the State of Nebraska providing a hunter safety training program to persons between the age and 12 and 16, before they would be able to hunt. We have something of a training program going on the State of Nebraska right now, but we find that without a definite standard, without some kind of guidelines that says that we want to reach every young hunter in the State of Nebraska with this kind of a training program, we just don't get into many of the communities. Basically this program will be funded with 75% Federal Funds. It would provide for a six hour course which would be administered by the Game and Parks Committee and they do have a staff set up now that is getting this type of thing in operation. The curriculum would cover such things as firearm safety, shooting skills, wild life and conservation knowledge. And I think one that is becoming very important in terms of the future hunting is hunting ethics. Feature number one, why do we need this particular thing is the safety issue. The State of Nebraska right now is running about twenty hunting accidents per year. This isn't including home accidents, which I think also would be affected. We're running an average four fatalities a year. The affect that we have seen with this type of training program in other states has been a dramatic reduction in a number of accidents and the number of fatalities. Utah is one example ended up with an 80% reduction in accidents, and a 65% reductions in fatalities. After the program had gone into affect. The other area that I think is extremely important in terms of the future hunting in Nebraska is to make sure that hunters who do go out in the field have some kind of training as to what they are doing. We have too many people who are going in the fields not knowing what they are doing, and I'm sure that agricultural people are very concerned about this. I know a number of letters that I have gotten in response to the bill in favoring the bill have been from farm families who would like to have the people that are coming out hunting know more about what they are doing before they get there, and of course this type of training would go into hunting ethics, where we start talking about just what is the right of the land owner and things like this. This basically explains the bill. The reason why we feel that we need to have uniform coverage is because without this type of a standard there are going to be communities of young people that are going to be missed. Generally we are finding that without uniform coverage the young people who do not get into the training program are the ones that need it the most. The ones that go to the training programs that are available under the present informal basis are generally sons and daughters of families that hunt, and of course the ones we want to get to are the ones who do not hunt. This basically explains the bill. I'd be glad to answer any questions that one has any questions on the bill.

PRESIDENT: Any discussion.

SENATOR ANDERSON: Senator Murphy has asked where, and when and how are the training sessions are going to be conducted. I