

SENATOR GOODRICH: Mr. President, members of the body, this is a bill to provide to let the Boards of Director of power districts to provide a health plan for the directors of the district. You will all recall that the REA's and several of the other power districts have come in and testified in favor of the bill. We did strike, in the amendment, we struck out "or other". So it is strictly a health plan for the directors now and only as long as they are on the Board of Directors. I move to advance the bill.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: The Chair recognizes Senator Venditte.

SENATOR VENDITTE: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, a question of Mr. Goodrich, Senator Goodrich.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: Senator Goodrich, will you respond?

SENATOR GOODRICH: Yes.

SENATOR VENDITTE: Senator Goodrich, what is going to be the fiscal impact on the rate payers with this particular piece of legislation?

SENATOR GOODRICH: Okay, I have got a quotation from, put it this way, I had the OPPD get a quotation from Mutual United of Omaha and it is for a total of, if I can find it here, about \$1700, \$1700 and some dollars per year, for this plan, for that district only.

SENATOR VENDITTE: That is the entire Board, is that right, Senator Goodrich? For the entire Board?

SENATOR GOODRICH: Yes.

SENATOR VENDITTE: Senator Goodrich, this may be somewhat repetitive but, nevertheless, can you again explain what the need is of such legislation.

SENATOR GOODRICH: Yes, you will recall, for example that the Omaha Public Power District decided as when their new Board got elected and the new people took control of the Board, they asked for this legislation to permit them to establish a plan for their own district there, for the Board members. What, when we introduced the bill, that called the attention to several power districts throughout the state who in turn said, wait a minute, we are already doing it. Then they started researching and found that it all hinges on how you interpret the statute as to whether a power district board member is an employee or not. If you interpret the statute that says he is an employee, then there is no need for this bill. However, the legal counsel for OPPD interpreted it that they were not employees and, consequently, they had to have a statutory authority for a plan. Consequently, all the other power districts come in and said, well, frankly we would like to have that bill, too, because we are already doing it, and since there is a question of how to interpret the statute, it is better we pass this bill and clear up the question.

SENATOR VENDITTE: Yes, Mr. Goodrich, I guess one comment. I would be in favor of this if, in fact, the rate payers