

May 17, 1985

LB 401

of sick leave I thought was phenomenal, the number of days of paid vacation I thought was phenomenal, the opportunity to be excused for jury duty I thought was nice, the opportunity to have a little military leave I thought was good. It went on, and on, and on, and on. The Nebraska Association of Public Employees may not have been able to do a good job in terms of getting wages up, but it has done a magnificent job on fringe benefits. There is fringe benefit, after fringe benefit, after fringe benefit built into our system right now for state employees. One of the appropriation bills that we are doing today contains provisions in it, like \$14,000 appropriated to Marvin Kivett, Director of the Nebraska Historical Society. So I said to my aide, check that out, what is this \$14,000 appropriated to Marvin Kivett, Director of the Nebraska Historical Society? Well, it turns out that we have to pay people when they retire for their unused sick leave, and he had \$14,000 worth of unused sick leave coming. The Department of Roads budget, that we protected nicely yesterday, contains \$25,000 in appropriations for unused sick leave that we buy out as people retire. Now come on, when is it going to stop? I don't have anybody buying out my sick leave because I don't have any sick leave. Well what we've got in 404 is another attempt by public employees to build a little more protection for themselves into the system, because it is a good system. It is a real good system. This protection is so that if a public employee finds that his boss or his organization is doing something that that public employee thinks might be incorrect, that public employee can then go to the public counsel, i.e., the Ombudsman, make a complaint and then have his job protected further than it already is under the Merit Plan, than it already is under the joint personnel program, protected further. I don't have that in my work. How many of you have that in your work? Now there comes a time, in my view, when just conferring benefit, after benefit, after benefit upon a person because they happen to be a public employee has to stop. I suggest that we defeat Senator Wesely's motion to reconsider, that this bill be read and it be defeated.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Warner, please.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I hadn't particularly intended to get involved in this issue today either. In fact, it wasn't until I heard Senator