

LB 59.

SENATOR LAMB: LB 59 has been advanced. The next bill is LB 134.

CLERK: Mr. President, 134 was introduced by the Speaker. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 9, referred to the Health and Human Services Committee for hearing, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill, Mr. President.

SENATOR LAMB: The Chair recognizes Senator Barrett.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, the bill which I bring to you today, LB 134, is a bill that would place members of a district or a county hospital board of trustees, or a director, under the purview of the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission. It would allow hospital board members to declare conflicts of interest and then refrain from voting on those issues in which they felt they might have a conflict of interest. Existing law prohibits people who have direct or indirect financial dealings with hospitals from sitting on these boards. It is a criminal offense, essentially, is what it amounts to. The matter came up from...as the result of a problem in my district with a district hospital in which the attorney for the hospital felt that there might be a conflict of interest in terms of members who were doing a minimal amount of business with the local subdivision and they might be in violation of a criminal statute. They could also perhaps render any decisions of the board to be void or invalid. In checking with the Attorney General's Office this summer, my office found that there had never been a complaint filed, there had never been one invoked, no opinions had ever been issued in this matter. It was my opinion then that this statute is obsolete and unnecessary. The second part of the bill essentially provides that the term "hospital" in the district hospital statute is made consistent with those types of hospital facilities that may be financed under the Nebraska Hospital Authorities Act which repeals a section which prohibits district hospitals from providing professional services directly or indirectly through its employees. That, basically, is the bill. It came out of Health and Human Services without a dissenting vote. I encourage you to advance it to E & R Initial. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR LAMB: The Chair recognizes Senator Wesely. Senator Wesely waives. Senator Barrett, do you have a close?