

there are other telephone bills that are in committee that we may discuss, but this is the one that has come out of the Transportation Committee and does realize and recognize a lot of work on both parties' behalf, and this is a bill that has been crafted over a period of time. The only committee amendments, however, is to add the emergency clause. There are two provisions in this bill, one that deals with the right to petition on rate cases, and also the deaveraging of toll charges, which is the long distance charges throughout the state that Senator Landis will eloquently, and Senator Moore, to the best of his ability, explain this morning how this bill works. And so what we're going to do is the committee amendment is more or less a housekeeping matter. If we do not, these two provisions are due to sunset on August 31. Without the emergency clause this bill would not come into effect until September 5 or some six days short. The measures would automatically sunset, even though the bill came into effect, but it would come into effect too late, and thus these things would...what we were trying to prevent would already occur by operation of law, thus the emergency clause, to make this come into existence in full force and effect. If you choose, and you believe in this legislation, the emergency clause is necessary to bring it into effect and into compliance. With that, I would urge the adoption of the committee amendments.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Kristensen. Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you, Madam President. Members of the Legislature, this measure comes in, as you can see on the committee statement, with the support of the Public Service Commission, the Nebraska Telephone Association, the Nebraska Farm Bureau, the Save Our Service consumer group, and US West Communications. There was no opposition. The bill does about four things, none of them are too terrifically significant. LB 286 does make the basic decision of trying to make adjustments to our existing telephone policy rather than to reverse that policy, and attempt to refine it. I would suggest that these are some very small steps in that refinement process, but are basically agreed to steps, and for that reason ought to be taken at this time. With respect to the petition process, the Public Service Commission suggests, the telephone industry agrees, and Senator Moore and I have, in our bill, a provision to allow for a longer petition process in areas where there are 50,000 access lines or more. The current standard is 60 days for the petition process, this would elongate that to 120 days.