

February 28, 1994 LB 1337

again reinforcing the fact that in Nebraska most of the jobs are there by virtue of small business and we recognize that in this state. And I'm going to tell you that that advisory committee recognizes the value of small business in the State of Nebraska, and that it can be a win-win situation I think for the Legislature in that we're not looking at any General Funds appropriation; for the employee that he will have his skills improved, it will give him an opportunity for promotions in the future, job stability; for corporations who need a trained work force; and for the improved economic health of the State of Nebraska, and for that reason, I would ask the body to advance the bill.

**SPEAKER WITHEM:** Thank you, Senator Hillman. Senator Hall.

**SENATOR HALL:** Thank you, Madam President and members. Again, I rise in support of the bill. That's not a problem, that's not a question. The issue is this, that we are turning over to this group a large sum of money that we're going to say, hey, develop a program for us and I think that that's probably, in many cases, when you look at the makeup of the committee, it's probably the best way to handle this process. My concern is only this, that we set some kind of record for purposes of what that committee ought to be looking at. In response somewhat to Senator Wehrbein's question about who loses or you can't, you know, the pie is still a piece short when you move some of this money over right now the 20 percent of interest to this new program, frankly, if anybody loses, and I don't think anyone necessarily does in this case, it would be the employee because those funds otherwise would be eligible for benefits. And, granted, Nebraska's unemployment balance has done nothing but continue to grow over the years and much of that is because of the, not only the basic job market that is out there right now, you know, 2.2 percent I think what the November figures of '93 in terms of unemployment, but the whole issue of how difficult it is to qualify and how easily someone is disqualified for purposes of those benefits, not to mention the level at which the benefits are currently at. That being what it is, the issue for me here is I want to make sure that the employees have some kind of say in terms of job training for purposes and they do have a representative who is on the advisory committee, but I think it is vitally important that they be an integral part of the mix here in terms of deciding how those monies are going to be spent and if they should even be eligible for them regardless of what the employer may or may not think. And I know that