

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

May 1, 2001

LB 711, 801

to be there 20 years before your surviving spouse gets a benefit. Under this bill we'll change that so that you get...your surviving spouse will get the benefit based on the number of years; if it's five, you'll get a proportional benefit; if it's ten, you'll get a proportional benefit. And there's a teacher in the Papillion School District whose very near death. In fact the Governor has agreed to stay tonight to sign this bill once we passed it. Now that was assuming that we were going to pass it tonight. Senator Coordsen told me he was going to file the amendment or told me he had filed the amendment at five to six was the first time I'd seen it. LB 801, the basis of this amendment, the Retirement Committee looked at again and again. And Senator Wickersham, of course, who's recognized as one of the authorities in this body on retirement issues, at least recognized by me if not a number of us, had a great deal of trouble with LB 801. The initial bill had a million dollar plus fiscal note. When we amended it, it had a several hundred thousand fiscal note. And I'm not sure which version we're looking at here. We're talking about a 14-page amendment. So this could be the \$500,000 versions, it could be the \$800,000 version, I don't know what it is. What I do know is when the Retirement Committee looked at the roughly \$400,000 version, the vote was 2 to 3, with 1 not voting to move it out. And the people voting against, so you can judge what kind of respect you have for the people voting against, were Senator Wehrbein, Senator Wickersham, and Senator Stuhr, chairman, chairman, chairman. Former Chairman of the Retirement Committee, Chairman of the Appropriations, Chairman of the Revenue Committee. Now why did they vote against it? They voted against it because they don't think it's ready; they don't think this bill is ready. It has a very significant fiscal note, again we're not sure what it is. We are trying to fix the legislative staff compensation problem. Part of that is...and we have a big number in the budget now for salaries, and I'm glad about that. I want to pay our people more. I want to be able to attract and retain the very best in legislative staff. And retirement is definitely a piece of that, there's no question. But this particular bill, we're not exactly sure what it does or how it does it. We haven't had the proper study, and in the Retirement Committee, let me tell you, studying retirement issues and retirement plans and how these changes