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January 18, 2002 LB 446

Veterans Affairs Committee, advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM0169, Legislative Journal page 557, First Session, 2001.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Hudkins, you're recognized to open on LB 446.

SENATOR HUDKINS: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. The current law regarding regulating airport improvement projects in the state of Nebraska requires that airport governing bodies designate the Department of Aeronautics as their agent in receiving or disbursing funds that they might receive from the Federal Aviation Administration. And LB 466 (sic--LB 446) would extend an option to the primary airports in Nebraska to either allow them to continue the current practice of obtaining assistance from that department, or they may deal directly with the Federal Aviation Administration when they use this federal funding. Currently, there are five primary airports in the state--Omaha, Lincoln, Grand Island, Scottsbluff, and Kearney--and these airports all have full-time staff who are knowledgeable and experienced in dealing with FAA grant procedures and the requirements, and typically have FAA funded projects every year. The primary airports in Nebraska are fully capable of managing their own projects and dealing directly with the FAA. Passage of this bill will allow the department to better focus its staff on projects that need the greatest attention in improving our airport system. Having the primary airport being able to deal directly with the FAA will allow the department more time to work with the approximately 60 "nonprimary" airports eligible for federal funding. With that, I would ask...answer any questions that you might ask. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Hudkins. Senator Schimek, you're recognized to open on the committee amendments, as Chairman of the Government and Military Affairs (sic) Committee...Chairperson, excuse me.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Am I on? Yes. Yes, Mr. President and members, I rise to support the bill and to explain the amendment, which Senator Hudkins actually brought to the