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LB 470

SENATOR BROMM: Thank you, Senator Coordsen and members of the Legislature. I would like to...to provide you with some explanation on LB 470. LB 470 is a bill that was introduced last year and has undergone some change since then, a lot of work, and I think it...and I'm very pleased to bring it to you in the form that it's in. I had kidded Senator Don Pederson I was going to give him 15 seconds of my opening for him simply to say those words that he says so very well and that he said to us a couple, three weeks ago, this is all about safety, but I couldn't...I couldn't be guaranteed that that's what he was going to say so I'm not going to give him that time, Mr. Chairman. This bill would impact the carrier enforcement division of the Nebraska State Patrol and the reason we bring you the bill is that there have been a disproportionate level of position vacancies in that carrier enforcement division and that's been building in the last several years. That is the primary reason. The chart that I handed out last Thursday when we were...I thought perhaps were moving to the bill and we never got to it, and maybe some of you still have it, it's got some red and some blue on it, but that shows the retention of carrier enforcement officers over the past several years and it shows the current years of service of officers in the carrier enforcement division and, as...as that chart would indicate, we have just a tremendous turnover in that division. Now I think that it's caused by several things and the primary causes we are attempting to fix with this bill. I think one of the primary problems is the inequity or the disparity in pay between the carrier enforcement division and the State Patrol. You have somewhere around a 17 percent difference in salary and besides the difference in retirement, which is a...a more attractive retirement in the State Patrol division. You have also limitations, if you will, on the duties of the carrier enforcement officers and, consequently, when an opening is available in the State Patrol, you naturally have applicants from the carrier enforcement division. Those applicants have received some training at the Grand Island Training Center, they have some experience, and they are naturally aspiring to become State Patrol officers. On the other hand, you do find that there are people in the State Patrol and who have moved to the State Patrol who, if they had the opportunity to do carrier