

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

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Obviously, with the budget and our usual responsibilities. I want to tell you that you've been very successful. You've probably been...you've been more successful than what a grateful state understands. And you've far, far exceeded that vocal minority of critics who criticize everything the government does. Oftentimes the press, and this year will probably be true, and many people will judge us by the last two weeks. But that's not the case, and you know better. This has been a long session. You've been through a very difficult time. You will remember 2002. It'll be a session you'll refer to for many years to come. You're the only ones who know how hard it's been, the difficult decisions that have been made, the knowledge that went into those decisions, and that there are more difficult solutions on the horizon that we're going to have to face. I'm proud of what you've done this year. You may not have anybody else in this state tell you thank you, but I think on behalf of the citizens, I want to thank you for all the work that you did. You've acted as a group calmly, deliberately, and professionally, to resolve the differences we had to do this year. And the key is you made decisions. You can ask no more of a Legislature. You made decisions. Now we acted as legislators, there may be some hard feelings. Those hard feelings will subside, and they should subside, because we're going to need everyone to begin to address the other problems we're going to have, whether it's next fall or next year. We've addressed over two-thirds of all the priority bills and the committee bills. We've far addressed the majority of those speaker priority bills. And don't forget all the bills that we did in January and February. This year we've probably...and it might be 127 now, but 128 bills we've passed. We've put almost another 100 bills into those bills. That easily puts us into what we average on a short session. And if you include all the budget problems, and those difficult decisions, this is one of the most successful short sessions we've had. And you ought to be...feel good about that. And it isn't the quality that the public is going to know about, they'll judge it by quantity. That isn't true. And this Legislature is not a stage for theater, but it's an institution for running the state of Nebraska. And from my point of view, you've done it very well. And I think you should go home with your heads held high. At this point, Mr. Clerk, we should proceed to end the session.