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FLOOR DEBATE

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be a difference in candidates with respect to their ability to use resources. Where the public stands in a moment of history can make a lot of difference. There are some years you can spend all the money you want and the public is going to vote against you anyway. That's true. But we're not trying to deal with odd situations, the aberrations. We're trying to deal with the cycle-by-cycle run of elections. The Campaign Finance Reform Act has been supported by the Journal-Star, it has been supported by the World-Herald. I submit to you it's supported by the people of the state. We will get into, eventually, philosophic, conceptual, and the different aspects of the situation that Senator Brashear described. But let me start out by indicating to you why I think this is an excellent campaign finance law, that we are already in the vanguard of people who have done good, thoughtful things in the eyes of people who look at this sort of thing nationally. I think I had passed out to you a document by a group that looks at different kinds of good government practices, including campaign finance reform. They think ours is the tenth-best in the nation. I think it's a lot better than that. If you pass Senator Brashear's bill, you won't have any campaign finance law at all, and we will sink to the bottom, where we most decidedly should not be. Let me go back and start telling you why I think this act is successful. First of all, I want to talk about the Legislature, because the Legislature is the main body to which this law has been applied, up until this particular point in time. The law has been applied for four different election cycles now, over 105 or 106 legislative races. And I want to say this as dramatically as I can, even though it's a bit of an overstatement. But I think that everyone in here can honestly say that since this act has gone into effect, nobody has bought their way into the Nebraska Legislature, nobody. When I first came into the legislative process, there were elections where people were, already in the eighties, spending \$100,000 and \$120,000 and \$150,000 on legislative elections, against opponents who couldn't muster anything like that amount in resources. And with respect to the Legislature, how much money has been spent, how much public, quote-unquote, money has been spent to attain that result? Zero. Zero. And that is one of the really fine things about this law, that it doesn't characteristically and as a matter of fact hand out, year in and year out, public money to people.