

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

April 13, 2004 LB 625

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Chambers, you're recognized to open on your motion to return.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, this is a bill which leads me to acknowledge that I made a strategic blunder earlier in the session. I allowed it, without objection, to be handled as a consent calendar bill. It is not the kind of bill which should have been there. And I will be much more attentive next session. And because of this blunder, there may not be any more consent calendars, as far as I'm concerned. I had relied on other people who were dealing with this bill to bring something that would not jeopardize the certification of the NEOC as an agency which could receive from HUD money to administer and see to the enforcement of fair housing laws. As it turns out, I'm in the position that former President John Kennedy found himself in when he relied on others to arrange the so-called Bay of Pigs Invasion of Cuba. There was to be air cover when this ragtag group of people were going to land and assault Cuba. But because of other political considerations, the support that the United States had assured these men they would receive was not forthcoming. It was a fiasco, and people died unnecessarily. John F. Kennedy's remark after that was, you should never trust the experts. Experts were working on this bill--those with the NEOC, those in the Legislature. We received various correspondences about this bill and what impact it would have on the ability of the NEOC to receive funds...that's the Nebraska Equal Opportunity Commission...to receive HUD funds to carry out enforcement activities. Some of those communications expressed concern. Subsequent communications indicated that everything was all right. Upon further inquiry, it develops that a change in this statute would trigger a review by HUD of the law that Nebraska has relative to the enforcement of fair housing laws. Nebraska is required to be in substantial compliance with the federal requirements. This bill as presented would allow information to be obtained while investigations are open and ongoing. One of my amendments, if you insist on doing this, would be to...well, let me not offer that way out. I don't think the bill ought to be enacted. I think it ought to be laid aside, and we should find out for sure what impact this bill would have.