

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office

Business and Labor Committee
May 17, 2017

[CONFIRMATION]

The Committee on Business and Labor met at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17, 2017, in Room 1525 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the gubernatorial appointment of Gerald Whitlock to the Boiler Safety Code Advisory Board. Senators present: Joni Albrecht, Chairperson; Sue Crawford, Vice Chairperson; Steve Halloran; and John Lowe. Senators absent: Ernie Chambers; Matt Hansen; and Sara Howard.

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Well, good afternoon and welcome to the Business and Labor Committee. I'm Senator Joni Albrecht; I'm from northeast Nebraska. I'll let everyone introduce themselves. Senator.

SENATOR HALLORAN: Senator Steve Halloran, District 33, Adams and Hall County.

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Senator Sue Crawford from Bellevue area.

SENATOR LOWE: John Lowe from 37 District, Kearney, Gibbon, and Shelton.

SENATOR ALBRECHT: And we have Meghan Chaffee is our as our counsel. We have Beverly Neel is the clerk. And we had Lee-Ann Sims is our page; she's out looking for others to join us. But today we have a confirmation hearing and we will go ahead and get started with Mike Whitlock on the Boiler Safety Code Advisory Board. Would you like to tell us a little bit about yourself? [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: Yes, Senator, thank you. My name is actually Gerald Michael Whitlock. I'm one of those lucky children where your parents name you one thing but call you by your middle name. But I'm...my father was in the Air Force; I'm not originally from Nebraska, but I lived in the state off and on since 1976. And once he retired from the Air Force, we stayed in the area. And I went to school in south Omaha and went into the Navy right after that and I was a nuclear propulsion operator on an U.S....on the USS Pasadena, which is a nuclear attack submarine based out of San Diego, California. I was there for...did that for six years; came back to Nebraska. Did some school. Went to work for U.S. Cold Storage in south Omaha where I was an engineer and picked up about ten years worth of industrial ammonia refrigeration experience there. And then I...the opportunity came for me to become a boiler inspector with the Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company in 2005, and I got my national board commission and state commissions and began doing boiler inspections within the state for locations that my company insures. I mainly handled eastern Nebraska, mainly Columbus to the Missouri River type area. And did that for about ten years and then last year I

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was promoted to the title of field service supervisor. So now I'm in charge of all the inspectors in Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa, so 11 to 12 people if you count the nuclear people, too. That's about it in a nutshell. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Awesome. Very good. Well, thank you. We'll just open it for questions. And anyone have any questions? Senator Crawford. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Thank you. And thank you for being here today. I appreciate you being here for the hearing. And also just wanted to thank you for your service and for agreeing to stay here in Nebraska and Sarpy County and just for your willingness to serve. You have a great background with all kinds of qualifications. And so I really appreciate your willingness to serve the state in this way. [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Thank you. And I apologize, I have to sneak out. [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: That's okay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: We will exec afterwards, so I'll have Beverly chase you down because we need to get this in. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR CRAWFORD: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Okay. Any other questions? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HALLORAN: How uncomfortable is it in a submarine? Is it...you get used to it, apparently. [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: You...it's sink or swim type of thing. So either you can do it or you can't. But, no, if I had a choice to do it all over again, I would have done the same thing. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HALLORAN: Good for you. [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR ALBRECHT: I'm going to ask just a couple of quick questions. Have you ever had any dealings with this board in the capacity that you're in right now? [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: I have gone to a few of the meetings before just as kind of a fly-on-the-wall type of...just to listen in and see the goings on. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: And do you have anything that you would like to bring to this board? Something that you see, maybe, out in the field that they might not... [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: Yeah, things in the field and things looking within the state statutes and things like that that could stand to be changed just a little bit to make things... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Okay. And that's good to know. And we're the board that would...or look at that anyway. So if there's something going on, please let us know so that...that would be. [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: Yeah. Okay. All right. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Yes, go ahead. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HALLORAN: Quickly, do you know...thank you, Madam Chair...do you know anyone that's currently on the board...personally anyone? [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: I knew the former member, the person that I might possibly be taking the spot of and the chief boiler inspector for the state of Nebraska, Chief Chris Cantrell. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: And I know many of the contractors and all that stuff for eastern side of Nebraska. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Good. Very good. I know this year we just changed a few things in the boiler act or...just on ways to identify you folks and what you do and that sort of thing. [CONFIRMATION]

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GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: Great. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: So if there are things that should be looked at, please bring it to the board and let us know and it's something that we could probably help you with, too. [CONFIRMATION]

GERALD MICHAEL WHITLOCK: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Any other questions? Seeing none, I will close the...well, obviously no one else is in the audience. We don't have any opponents, proponents, or anyone in neutral position. So at this time I'd just entertain a motion to... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LOWE: I make a motion we approve... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: We're going to go into exec to do that, but you can just make a motion to adjourn. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LOWE: I make a motion to adjourn. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HALLORAN: I second it. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR ALBRECHT: Okay. So, if you would like, you can go ahead and go home or whatever, but we'll be in contact with you as soon as...I have to bring this... [CONFIRMATION]