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Transcriber's Office

Floor Debate
March 01, 2017

[LB16 LB88 LB99 LB173 LB203 LB204 LB243 LB258 LB271 LB285 LB289 LB296 LB310
LB340 LB472 LB483 LB492 LB514 LB589 LB638 LB661 LR51 LR52 LR53]

SPEAKER SCHEER PRESIDING

SPEAKER SCHEER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber for the thirty-eighth day of the One Hundred Fifth Legislature, First Session. Our chaplain today is Senator Wishart. Please rise.

SENATOR WISHART: (Prayer offered.)

SPEAKER SCHEER: Thank you, Senator Wishart. I call to order the thirty-eighth day of One Hundred Fifth Legislature, First Session. Senators please record your presence. Roll call. Happy birthday, Nebraska. (Doctor of the day introduced.) Have all checked in that wish to? Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: I have a quorum present, Mr. President.

SPEAKER SCHEER: Thank you. Are there any corrections for the Journal?

CLERK: I have no corrections.

SPEAKER SCHEER: Any messages, reports, or announcements?

CLERK: Mr. President, your Committee on Revenue reports...or offers hearing notices, several hearing notices, those all signed by Senator Smith as Chair of the Revenue Committee. Your Committee on Health and Human Services, chaired by Senator Riepe, reports LB88 to General File, LB285 to General File with amendments. Judiciary, chaired by Senator Ebke, reports LB173, LB289 to General File; LB204, LB243, LB258, LB296, and LB492 to General File with amendments. And Transportation Committee, chaired by Senator Friesen, reports LB310, LB472, LB483 to General File. Mr. President, I also have series of appointment letters. All of the appointees will be referred to Reference for referral to standing committee for confirmation hearing, appointments to the Public Employees Retirement Board, the State Racing Commission, and the Board of Trustees of Nebraska State Colleges. That's all that I have, Mr. President. (Legislative Journal pages 569-580.) [LB88 LB285 LB173 LB289 LB204 LB243 LB258 LB296 LB492 LB310 LB472 LB483]

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SPEAKER SCHEER: Proceed to the agenda. You have a motion?

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Wishart would move to recess the body until 1:30 p.m.

SPEAKER SCHEER: You've heard the motion. All those in favor say aye. All those opposed, nay. I believe the ayes have it. We are in recess.

RECESS

PRESIDENT FOLEY PRESIDING

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Members of the One Hundred Fifth Legislature, if you could please check in and record your presence. Roll call. Mr. Clerk, please record the presence of the senators.

CLERK: Mr. President, reporting. (Roll read.) I do have a quorum present, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Are there any messages, reports, or announcements for the record?

CLERK: I do, Mr. President. New resolution: Senator Bolz offers LR52, LR53, and LR54 (sic: not LR54). (Senator Kolterman offers LR51.) Those will be laid over at this time. Enrollment and Review also reports LB16, LB99, LB203 to Select File, all having Enrollment and Review amendments attached. Mr. President, Senator Kuehn has selected LB661 as his priority bill. And that's all that I have at this time, Mr. President. (Legislative Journal pages 581-584.) [LR51 LR52 LR53 LB16 LB99 LB203 LB661]

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Would the following three senators please serve us as the escort committee to bring the Secretary of State into the Legislative Chamber: Senator Murante, Senator Brewer, Senator Craighead. If you could please retire to the rear of the Chamber for the purposes of escorting the Secretary of State. Please be seated. Mr. Sergeant at Arms, you're recognized.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Mr. President, your committee now escorting Secretary of State John Gale.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Members of the Legislature and distinguished guests, please welcome Secretary of State John Gale. Would the following five senators please serve as the escort

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committee to escort the Nebraska Supreme Court into the Chamber: Senator Ebke, Senator Hilkemann, Senator Halloran, Senator Hansen, Senator Krist. If those five senators could please retire to the rear of the Chamber and escort the Nebraska State Supreme Court. Ladies and gentlemen, you may please be seated while we're waiting for the Supreme Court to arrive. Mr. Sergeant at Arms, you're recognized.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Mr. Speaker, your committee now escorting the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the great State of Nebraska, Mike Heavican, and members of the court.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, sir. Please welcome Chief Justice Michael Heavican, Justice William Cassel, Justice Jeffrey Funke, Justice Max Kelch, Justice Lindsey Miller-Lerman, Justice Stephanie Stacy, and Justice John Wright. Members of Nebraska State Supreme Court, welcome all. Ladies and gentlemen, please be seated. Would the following five senators please serve as the escort committee to escort the Governor and the First Lady into the Legislative Chamber: Senator Watermeier, Senator Bolz, Senator Hilgers, Senator Smith, Senator Stinner. Would those five senators please retire to the rear of the Chamber for the purposes of escorting the Governor and the First Lady. Mr. Sergeant at Arms, you're recognized.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Mr. President, your committee now escorting the Governor of the great state of Nebraska, Governor Pete Ricketts and First Lady Susanne Shore.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Members of the One Hundred Fifth Legislature, please welcome Governor Pete Ricketts and First Lady Susanne Shore. Please be seated. Well, good afternoon, one and all. I am Lieutenant Governor Mike Foley and it's my great pleasure to welcome all of you to the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber for Nebraska's official Statehood Day ceremony. We're so pleased to see all of you here at our magnificent State Capitol. We've previously welcomed our Governor, First Lady, members of the Nebraska State Supreme Court, and our Secretary of State. I also want to recognize other officers of the state who I understand are present with us today. And as their names are called, we'll ask them to please rise and let us recognize you and thank you for your public service. First I understand that Attorney General, the Honorable Doug Peterson is here. Mr. Attorney General, if you could please rise and let us recognize you and thank you for your service. Next we have with us our Nebraska State Treasurer Don Stenberg. Treasurer Stenberg, could you please rise and let us recognize you and thank you for your service. And last but certainly not least, we have with us our Nebraska State Auditor of Public Accounts, Mr. Charlie Janssen. Auditor Janssen, could you please rise and let us welcome you and thank you. I'm also informed that two members of Nebraska Court of Appeals are with us here today. Could I please ask that the Honorable Everett Inbody and the Honorable Riko Bishop please rise so we can recognize you and thank you for your service. And I would ask us all to please rise for the presentation of colors by the Nebraska National Guard.

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PRESENTATION OF COLORS

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Please remain standing and join me in welcoming vocalist, a finalist from The Voice, Nebraska's own Ms. Hannah Huston, a native of Grand Island, who will sing "The Star-Spangled Banner." Ms. Huston.

HANNAH HUSTON: ("The Star-Spangled Banner" sung.)

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Ms. Huston. That was beautiful and we'll look forward to your return to the program a bit later. Please be seated everyone. And now it's my great honor to welcome to the podium a Nebraska City native and the 40th Governor of the great State of Nebraska, Governor Pete Ricketts. Welcome, Governor Ricketts.

GOVERNOR RICKETTS: Thank you. Thank you everybody. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for that warm reception. Lieutenant Governor, thank you. And I am here to welcome everybody, so welcome to all of our distinguished guests and members of the Legislature who are obviously here, day in and day out. We also have the Supreme Court and Chief Heavican, and of course, welcome, Speaker, and everyone who has joined us today in the galleries. Happy Statehood Day! Today is our 150th anniversary of statehood, our sesquicentennial. And I cannot tell you how many fourth graders I've tried to teach that word to. I caught them in the hallways as they're taking their tours. "Sesquicentennial," get them to say it three times fast. It's also our birthday, and anniversaries and birthdays are excellent times for us to celebrate and, in this case, to really reflect upon how blessed we are to live in Nebraska, that we live in the most wonderful place in the world. And the reason that we have this great state, that we have these wonderful blessings, is because of the people who came before us. Certainly the first people to Nebraska were the Native Americans, and this land has always represented that land of opportunity. Many of the peoples who came here are reflected on our ceiling. We see them up above us: Spanish and the French Americans. I think about the immigrants that came here, whether they were the Czech or the Irish who helped build the railroads, settled O'Neill, Germans, or recently the Hispanics who came here. I think about all the wonderful things about our state as I've had the chance to travel around, and we are a state that has been very geographically diverse. Think about eastern Nebraska and the Missouri River going through the Platte River Valley, the Sandhills, the Wildcat Hills, the Pine Ridge. We go from about 1,000 feet in elevation up to over 5,000. We go from a wet part of the state on the eastern side to a dry part of the state on the western side. But for all that geographic diversity and all the different peoples who have come to our state, Nebraskans share a sense of identity. It goes back to who we are as a people, the characteristics that make us Nebraskans: that Nebraska grit and perseverance for all the people who came here and had to deal with cold winters and dry summers; the people who were the pioneers who came and turned what was then known as the Great American Desert into

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the most productive agricultural land in the world. It's always required courage and determination, perseverance, but also a sense of community-mindedness, of working together, of coming together to solve our common problems. These have been characteristics of Nebraskans, our Nebraska virtues that it allowed the people who came before us to build this great state. I think about our heroes, people like George Flippin. He was one of...he was the first African-American who played football for the University of Nebraska and endured discrimination and racism. In fact, the University of Missouri, when Nebraska was supposed to play them, refused to play him because...play Nebraska because he was black. Now they ended up forfeiting that game so it worked out to our benefit, but that shows you that we were on the cutting edge of civil rights. And of course, if you're talking about civil rights, you cannot forget Ponca Chief Standing Bear. Because of an error by the federal government, the federal government moved the Ponca Tribe out of northeast Nebraska down to Oklahoma. It was grueling travel to get there: 600 miles by foot. The Ponca lost many of their members. In fact, Chief Standing Bear's son died in Oklahoma and his dying request was to be buried in Nebraska because he loved this state so much. So Chief Standing Bear brought the body of his son back to the state and was arrested. And of course this ended up in the landmark civil court...civil rights trial where our courts of justice established that Native Americans were people just like all other Americans. In that trial, Chief Standing Bear said: This hand is not the same color as yours, but if I pierce it I shall feel pain; the blood that will flow from mine is the same color as yours; I am a man; God made me the same as he made you. I think about Minnie Freeman who, during the blizzard of 1888, while her schoolhouse sod roof was collapsing, was able to save her children. The day had started out beautiful, actually. It was a January day. Kids were even allowed to play outside in the morning. It went from 30 degrees down to 40 below. The blizzard blew in and became whiteout conditions. But she organized the children, pointed herself in the direction toward the boarding house a half a mile away. She had to feel through the storm to find the house, but she saved every one of those children. I think about Ben Kuroki, the Japanese-American who had to fight to fight for his country in World War II. He ended up being the only Japanese-American airman to participate in the Pacific Theater. Or Ed Gomez, from Omaha: In the Korean war a grenade was tossed into his machine gun team's area. He picked up the grenade and jumped into a trench. At the cost of his own life, he saved his entire team. And then finally, the person that we're all here as responsible for...who is responsible for us being here in a way: George Norris, who traveled around the state 5,000 miles, wearing out two sets of tires, to advocate for our Unicameral. He's one of only five U.S. senators whose portrait is on permanent display in the Capitol and is widely recognized as one of the greatest U.S. senators ever. These are our heroes, the men and women who demonstrated that Nebraska grit, those Nebraska virtues of perseverance, of courage, of hard work, of community-mindedness, of putting themselves above...or putting the others above themselves. These are the people whose examples we have to live up to as we build for the future. And so as we reflect upon our great history and all the heroes and the people who came here before us that built this great state, we also need to think about the future and remember that while we certainly will have our differences, and sometimes those differences play out on the

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floor of this Chamber, there is much more in common that we have than that sets us apart, there is much more that binds us together. Nebraska, as I've said many times in the past, is not just lines on a map. We're bound together by more than just our common geography. Nebraska is a culture, a way of life. It's how we treat each other with dignity and respect and how we work together to build this great state. In fact, Nebraska is what America is supposed to be. So as we think about our future, as we think about all the possibilities, let's remember on this day all of the people who came before us that sacrificed for their families and their communities, that endured the hardships or the persecutions to leave us this great state. We are, indeed, blessed that we live in the best place in the world right here in Nebraska. God bless you all for your work and God bless the great state of Nebraska.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Governor Ricketts, for those inspiring words. And now please join me welcoming to the podium Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale. Secretary Gale.

JOHN GALE: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. As a lawyer, I had to take a moment and say hello to the judges. Thank you. "Proclamation 164: Admission of Nebraska Into the Union, March 1, 1867. BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. A PROCLAMATION. WHEREAS the Congress of the United States did by an act approved on the 19th day of April, 1864, authorize the people of the Territory of Nebraska to form a constitution and State government and for the admission of such State into the Union on an equal footing with the original States upon certain conditions in said act specified; and WHEREAS said people did adopt a constitution conforming to the provisions and conditions of said act and ask admission into the Union; and WHEREAS the Congress of the United States did on the 8th and 9th days of February, 1867, in mode prescribed by the Constitution, pass a further act for the admission of the State of Nebraska into the Union, in which last-named act it was provided that it should not take effect except upon the fundamental condition that within the State of Nebraska there should be no denial of the elective franchise or of any other right to any person by reason of race or color, excepting Indians not taxed, and upon the further fundamental condition that the legislature of said State, by a solemn public act, should declare the assent of said State to the said fundamental condition and should transmit to the President of the United States an authenticated copy of said act of the legislature of said State, upon receipt whereof the President, by proclamation, should forthwith announce the fact, whereupon said fundamental condition should be held as a part of the organic law of the State, and thereupon, and without any further proceeding on the part of Congress, the admission of said State into the Union should be considered as complete; and WHEREAS within the time prescribed by said act of Congress of the 8th and 9th of February, 1867, the legislature of the State of Nebraska did pass an act ratifying the said act of Congress of the 8th and 9th of February, 1867, and declaring that the aforementioned provisions of the third section of said last-named act of Congress should be a part of the organic law of the State of Nebraska; and WHEREAS a duly authenticated copy of said act of the legislature of the State of Nebraska has been received by me: Now, therefore, I, Andrew

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Johnson, President of the United States of America, do, in accordance with the provisions of the act of Congress last herein named, declare and proclaim the fact that the fundamental conditions imposed by Congress on the State of Nebraska to entitle that State to admission to the Union have been ratified and accepted and that the admission of the said State into the Union is now complete. In testimony whereof I have hereto set my hand and have caused the seal of the United States to be affixed. Done at the city of Washington, this 1st day of March, A.D. 1867...ANDREW JOHNSON. By the President: WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State." Thank you.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. We're very pleased to welcome a wonderful group of third, fourth, and fifth grade students from the Everett Elementary School here in Lincoln. The Everett Elementary Chorus will lead a statewide singalong of "Happy Birthday, Nebraska" under the direction of Sue Springer, Nebraska Music Teacher of the Year. Please welcome Everett Elementary School.

EVERETT ELEMENTARY CHORUS: ("Happy Birthday" sung.)

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Everett Elementary Chorus. It's now our pleasure to welcome Lyons native, Nebraska State Poet Twyla Hansen, who will read an original poem she wrote for this occasion. Ms. Hansen.

TWYLA HANSEN: Thank you so much. It's my great honor to be standing here today on this special and historic day. I'd just like to preface my poem by first saying the first poems were thought to be recited in the oral tradition to remember history, genealogy, and the law. Poems are also mostly written now, we commonly know them in the form of music, prayers, and stories. Throughout the ages people have turned to poetry to mark occasions of all kinds. I did a little research and in 1917, for Nebraska's 50th statehood celebration, a \$100 prize was offered for a poetic ballad to be written and then it was set to music. According to the Nebraska Blue Book, in 1967, for Nebraska's centennial, our Legislature officially declared "Beautiful Nebraska" as our state song. And in 1997, Governor Ben Nelson declared the words and music of "A Place Like Nebraska" to be our state ballad. So just as an aside, I think my poem will have to be set to music before it becomes official. (Laughter) Let me know if you're interested. Okay, my poem Nebraska: A Treasured State focuses on our natural resources, and I especially appreciate the words of Governor Ricketts because I think some of my words are in the poem and his words. It focuses on our natural resources. It is written in three stanzas or sections, each with a title. The stanzas roughly represent earth, water, air, and past, present, future. A short note after the poem reads, and I'll quote, "The poem is inspired by works of art in the Nebraska Capitol, including marble mosaics 'Earth as Life-Giver,'" out in the Rotunda, "murals 'The Labors of the Hand, Heart, and Head,' and the Sower representing agriculture and the philosophy that the purpose in

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forming societies is to sow the nobler seeds of living." The ending line is from Hartley Burr Alexander, the Capitol's theme consultant during its construction in the 1930s. This afternoon I would like to dedicate the poem to my grandparents who came to the U.S. from Denmark in the late 1800s to farm in Burt County on the land where I grew up in the 1950s and '60s. And so, without further delay, Nebraska: A Treasured State: Palimpsest / Our lives a layered history, formed from rock, / sea water, flora, megafauna bones, / the first people and grasslands that yielded / to power and plow, our soils that founded / the fortunes of immigrants, following / animal tracks, wagon wheels, roads and highways, / lines on maps that separate and connect, / from buttes to sand hills to loess and to loam: / our fire, our nourishing Earth as life-giver. / Watershed / Nebraska: Omaha name for flat water, / flowing through stream and plant and all beings / legged, winged, finned, slithering, rooted, seen, unseen-- / Platte, Niobrara, Elkhorn, Loup, Nemaha, / Ogallala aquifer—our lifeblood, essence / of all greenness: cropland, rangeland, forests. / From open flyways to urban canyons, / we celebrate and use this priceless gift, / its elements on which all life depends. / Vision / Here, we weather hail, heat, drought, tornado, / wind, flood, blizzard, thunderstorms, the whims of / Great Plains climate. Yet we crave each sunrise, / each clean breath here beneath the Milky Way-- / our unfettered star-gazing perspective-- / dream big for generations that succeed. / Our time is brief: let us tread lightly, praise / the labor of hands, hearts, minds. Together / sing the good, sow the seeds for nobler life. Thank you.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Ms. Hansen, for the beautiful poetry. And now if you'll please join me in welcoming a native of Columbus, Nebraska, the Chief Justice of the Nebraska State Supreme Court, Justice Mike Heavican.

MIKE HEAVICAN: Thank you, Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, Governor Ricketts, First Lady Shore, Nebraska dignitaries, and all of my fellow Nebraskans. First I will introduce the other members of the court following to my left: in the front row, Justice John Wright of Scottsbluff; Justice Lindsey Miller-Lerman of Omaha; Justice William Cassel of O'Neill; and Justice Stephanie Stacy of Lincoln; and in the back row, Justice Max Kelch of Papillion and Justice Jeff Funke of Nebraska City. Our state motto is "Equality before the law." Our forebears chose those words because they embodied the spirit of democracy and hope and freedom that so aptly symbolized Nebraska in 1867. The motto is carved in stone on the entrance of this building and also appears above the bench of our court, in the Governor's Office, and in the Warner Chamber. It is the special role of Nebraska's judiciary and Nebraska's legal profession to carry out the promise of "Equality before the law." Nebraska's courts provide citizens with an open, fair, efficient, and independent forum for the resolution of legal disputes. In the courthouses in all 93 of Nebraska's counties, "Equality before the law" is on display and thriving. From Nebraska's inception our courts were open and accessible. Today, the first day of March, 2017, marks the beginning of an expanded media...of expanded media access to all Nebraska's courts. News cameras will have access to the inside of courtrooms on a statewide

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basis for the very first time. The Nebraska Supreme Court and the Nebraska Court of Appeals continue to "Webcast" our oral arguments which are archived and available on the court's Web site. Nebraska's courts and its legal community have contributed greatly to the concept of "Equality before the law" over the past 150 years. Great Nebraska lawyers include Roscoe Pound, who was dean of the Nebraska Law School from 1903 to 1907, dean of the Harvard Law School from 1916 to 1936, and prior to that, Commissioner of Appeals for the Nebraska Supreme Court from 1901 to 1903. Roscoe Pound was one of the most prominent legal scholars of the 20th century. His contemporaries included Nebraska lawyers William Jennings Bryan, three-time candidate for President of the United States and eventual Secretary of State of the United States; Charles Dawes, who served as Vice President of the United States from 1925 to 1929; and General John J. Pershing, who commanded the American Expeditionary Force in Europe during World War I. General Pershing obtained his law degree in Nebraska in 1893. Sixteen of Nebraska's 40 Governors were lawyers, including, most recently, Robert Crosby and Ralph Brooks, Frank Morrison, Charles Thone, Ben Nelson, and Mike Johanns. The father of Nebraska's unique Unicameral Legislature, as noted by the Governor, George W. Norris practiced law and was a judge in southwest Nebraska before serving five terms in the United States House of Representatives, and 30 years as a United States senator. In short, Nebraska's courts and broader legal community have contributed magnificently to the progression of Nebraska history and that most American of concepts, "Equality before the law," over the past 150 years. Today Nebraska judges continue the long tradition of "Equality before the law." They make life and death decisions in criminal cases. They decide contract and tort disputes. They arbitrate the use of Nebraska's waters, and they cope with innumerable divorce tragedies and probate cases. The courts place a special emphasis on the treatment of juveniles in the legal system and our judges lead drug courts, veterans courts, and other specialty courts that grapple with the evident challenges of our 21st-century life. The primary role of Nebraska's courts has remained the same, however, over the last 150 years and will remain the same into Nebraska's future. "Equality before the law" will inspire Nebraska's judiciary and all Nebraskans to work hard and treat our neighbors fairly and justly for the common good. Happy birthday, Nebraska, from Nebraska's Supreme Court and all of Nebraska's judiciary and members of the legal profession. We look forward to helping Nebraska grow and prosper in the next 150 years. Thank you.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice, for your service and for your kind words. We're pleased to have with us today an octet from Waverly High School. They're here to sing our state song, "Beautiful Nebraska," under the direction of Rachel Kornfeld.

WAVERLY SINGERS OCTET: ("Beautiful Nebraska" sung.)

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PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Waverly High School. That was spectacular. And now please join me in welcoming District 19 Senator and Speaker of the One Hundred Fifth Legislature, Senator Jim Scheer of Norfolk.

SPEAKER SCHEER: Thank you. We have three separate but equal branches of government. And as you noticed, I elevated myself to make sure that I did not let my colleagues down that we are of equal stature, so this is for you. I will go off script just a second. Nebraska was a Native land to begin with. And I've known someone my entire life and she has done just impeccable work with the Indian Commission. She's being honored this year but I wanted to take this opportunity to honor her, as well, because I can't think of a more fitting time to pay tribute to someone of her stature: Judi gaiashkibos. Judi, would you please stand and be recognized. I've known Judi almost my entire life. She is also a Norfolk native and I couldn't be prouder of her for what she has accomplished for herself and her family and her Native American brothers in the state of Nebraska. Thank you so much. And back to script: On behalf of my colleagues, it is a pleasure to be here at the sesquicentennial ceremony with you today and joining in the 150 years of our statehood. During Nebraska's history, there have been several individuals who have made great contributions to Nebraska's success. I'd like to thank those that came before us, many of whom are in attendance today, that have fostered the growth and the development of our state, be it a former Governor or a senator or other elected official or just an engaged citizen, for it's through their ingenuity, dedication, and passion for this great state of Nebraska that allowed us to reach this tremendous milestone. The world has changed a lot since March 1, 1967 (sic), and so has Nebraska. We've certainly come a long ways in our 150 years. Nebraska became a key player in connecting our great nation through the Transcontinental Railroad. We've become a driving force in both agriculture and industry, and we've been...served as the epicenter for many of the major political events. In Nebraska we enjoy and embrace local politics more than any other state. We place great emphasis on our local school boards, county assessors, clerks, commissioners, as well as other locally elected positions as mayors and city councilmen. We value the relationship and the access to our public officials. Many of us started down our path as public servants at the local level. I spent over 20 years serving my community on the local school board, serving as mayor, the State Board of Education, before coming down to Lincoln to serve in the Unicameral. As Nebraskans we understand that we have the most control and the most say at the local level and truly believe in the saying that all politics are local. It's the final point that I'd like to focus a little on. As Speaker of the Legislature and being in this, our Legislative Chamber, it seems fit to me to highlight the history of our Legislature. George Norris is known as the architect of this unique government experiment that we call the Unicameral. Norris was a strong believer in improving government efficiency, increasing transparency, eliminating corruption, and bringing government to the people. It was his belief that a Unicameral Legislature would accomplish each of those legislative objectives. Norris campaigned throughout the state, gathering signatures for that petition, to create the Unicameral Legislature and do away with what he believed was an inefficient and unnecessary system. A Unicameral system, he

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argued, would do away with the duplicative system of having two houses of the Legislature completing the same task. He once stated: The constitutions of our various states are built upon the idea that there is but one class. And if this is true, there is no sense or reason in having the same house do the same thing twice. He placed great significant emphasis on the term "one class" as he thought the bicameral model was too similar to the British Parliament with one house representing those of the common man and the other representing the lords of the land. The Unicameral was a way of emphasizing that we all are of one class. Additionally, Norris believed that the Unicameral would open the process to the public, therefore, greater transparency and limiting corruption. Under the bicameral system, there were numerous ways that actions of elected officials could be hidden from public view. In advocating for the Unicameral system Norris stated that every act of the Legislature and every act of every individual must be transacted in the spotlight of the publicity. Today our Unicameral is arguably the most efficient and transparent legislative branch in existence. One final point on Norris, he viewed Nebraska as one community, not a divided state. He fought with conviction for a fair and equal representation of shared thoughts and interests. This is the core principle that we still hold in this Legislature today. Each one of us was elected by our own constituents for a multitude of reasons, yet we all share one greater, overarching goal in common. That goal is the betterment of the state of Nebraska. We all serve in the Legislature because we truly believe in the state of Nebraska and want to ensure that we protect it for future generations. We all want to ensure that the next 150 years will indeed be better than the past, and I am confident to say to you that it will be. Moving forward as a state, it is important to remember where we have been and how we've got here, but we need to keep our eyes focused on the future and ensure that the Nebraska we leave for your children and my grandchildren is better than we inherited. With that, I will simply close by saying happy birthday to Nebraska, and may God bless the great state of Nebraska.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Speaker Scheer, for your public service and those inspiring words. Once again we're delighted to welcome back vocalist Hannah Huston of Grand Island, Nebraska, for her rendition of "America the Beautiful."

HANNAH HUSTON: ("America the Beautiful" sung.)

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Ms. Huston. And now for some closing remarks, the Governor of the great state of Nebraska, Governor Pete Ricketts.

GOVERNOR RICKETTS: Thank you. Thank you. Well, hasn't this been a very nice celebration? Yeah. Let's please give a round of applause for all the people who have done such a wonderful job, and in particular let's remember the school kids, our octet from Waverly, our poet, and, of course, Hannah Huston who just did a fantastic job. Let's give them all one more round of applause. And today is March 1, our birthday for the state, but it is also another person's birthday

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here within the Chamber. Senator Bolz, would you please stand so we can give you a round of applause. We're not going to sing to you, Senator Bolz. Well, we won't sing. And it is also Deb Fischer's birthday today, our U.S. senator, so that's another nice Nebraska birthday we have here. Well, thank you all again for coming here today to help celebrate our 150th anniversary of statehood. We certainly live in the best place in the world to live, work, and raise a family, and it's because of people like you. And thank you to all of the members of the Legislature for hosting us here today, Speaker Scheer, Chief Heavican for being here as well, and all of our guests who came and made this celebration so wonderful. What I'd like to do is round out the presentations today by reading a proclamation. So the Secretary of State read the proclamation from Andrew Johnson that made us a state. And a little fact here, we are the only state that became a state with a presidential veto. He actually vetoed our statehood the first time and the Congress had to override him, so there's the legislative body in action for you, right? Isn't that awesome? So I have a proclamation here: State of Nebraska. Proclamation. WHEREAS, President Andrew Johnson proclaimed Nebraska as the 37th state on March 1, 1867; and WHEREAS, Nebraska has become known as 'The Good Life,' a state full of great opportunities over the last 150 years; and WHEREAS, Agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism are Nebraska's top three industries and major job creators in the state; and WHEREAS, Nebraska recently exceeded a landmark employment level with over 1 million non-farm jobs; and WHEREAS, Nebraska's population has flourished, reaching 1.9 million dollars (sic) for the first time in our history in 2016; and WHEREAS, The loyal and hardworking people of Nebraska have made our state the best place in the world to live, work, and raise a family; WHEREAS, Nebraskans across the state are celebrating our 150th sescoolcentennial (phonetically)...sesquicentennial--boy, I taught all those fourth graders and I couldn't get it right there--sesquicentennial anniversary throughout 2017; and WHEREAS, From Scottsbluff to Omaha, First Lady Susanne Shore and I encourage Nebraskans to join celebrations across the state in the coming months. NOW, THEREFORE, I, Pete Ricketts, Governor of the State of Nebraska, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM the 1st day of March, 2017 as NEBRASKA STATEHOOD DAY in Nebraska and I do hereby urge all citizens to take due note of the observance. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand, and cause the Great Seal of the State of Nebraska to be affixed this First day of March, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Seventeen. And now I will sign it and make it official. We are proclaimed Statehood Day. I had to show the court there to make sure they knew it was all official. So again, thank you all very much for being here today. Thank you for all of you, for what you do for our state. We do a lot in state government. We protect the public safety. We build the roads that allow us to go to work or see our families. We take care of the most vulnerable people in our state. But we could do none of it without what you do each and every day. God bless you all and God bless the great state of Nebraska.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Thank you, Governor Ricketts. Once again, I want to thank all of you for being here today in the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber. Would Senators Watermeier, Senator Bolz, Senator Hilgers, Senator Smith, and Senator Stinner please proceed to the front of

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

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the Chamber and escort the Governor and Susanne Shore, our First Lady, from the Legislative Chamber. Would Senators Ebke, Senator Hilkemann, Senator Halloran, Senator Hansen, and Senator Krist please proceed to the front of the Chamber for the purposes of escorting Chief Justice Mike Heavican and the members of the Nebraska State Supreme Court from the Chamber. Would Senator Murante, Senator Brewer, and Senator Craighead please return to the front of the Chamber for the purposes of escorting the Secretary of State from the Chamber. Mr. Clerk, you're recognized.

CLERK: Mr. President, a few items. The Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee will have an Executive Session in Room 2022 upon adjournment; that's the Government Committee in Room 2022. Series of name adds: Senator Geist to LB271; Senator Brewer to LB340; Senator Watermeier to LB514; Senator Baker, LB589; Senator McDonnell, LB638. (Legislative Journal page 585.) [LB271 LB340 LB514 LB589 LB638]

Mr. President, a priority motion, Senator Stinner would move to adjourn the body until Thursday morning, March 2, at 9:00 a.m.

PRESIDENT FOLEY: Members, you've heard the motion to adjourn. All those in favor say aye. Those opposed say nay. We are adjourned.