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Transportation and Telecommunications Committee January 30, 2024  
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**MOSER:** Everything on? The Transportation and Telecommunications Committee hearing will now come to order. I'm Mike Moser. I chair the committee and I represent District 22 in the Legislature. It's Platte County and most of Stanton County. And then we'll start introductions with Senator Bosn.

**BOSN:** Thank you. I'm Carolyn Bosn, District 25, which is southeast Lincoln, Lancaster County out to Bennet.

**BRANDT:** Senator Tom Brandt, District 32: Fillmore, Thayer, Jefferson, Saline, and southwestern Lancaster Counties.

**MOSER:** John.

**FREDRICKSON:** I'm John Fredrickson. I represent District 20, which is in central-west Omaha.

**BOSTELMAN:** Bruce Bostelman, District 23: Saunders, Butler, and Colfax Counties.

**MOSER:** We have several senators that are not here at the moment, but probably will be along. They could be in other committees opening on bills or testifying. Our committee clerk is Lynne Woody. Our legal counsel is Mike Hybl. If you want to testify, there are some blue testifier sheets over on that table by the door. You have to fill one of those out and give it to the pages when you come up. Our pages today are Ethan and Ruby. If you're not testifying but would like to record your presence, sign the gold sheet in the book on the table near the entrance. Handouts submitted by testifiers will be included as part of the record as exhibits. Please provide 10 copies of any handouts and give them to the page. Senators may come and go during the hearing. It's common and required as they may be presenting bills in other committees. Testimony will begin with the introducer's opening statement. Then we'll hear from supporters, those in opposition, and those speaking in the neutral. And then introducers of bills will be given the opportunity to make closing statements if they desire. Please begin your testimony by giving us your first and last name, and please also spell them for the record. We will be using a 3-minute timer light today. There are no demonstrations of opposition or support allowed on testimony in our hearing. Please turn your phones off. Put yourselves on vibrate otherwise, so they can't ring and disturb the meeting. With that, we'll get into our gubernatorial appointments. Richard Meginnis for the State Highway Commission. Come

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on down. How much is this car worth? Oh, wait a minute, that's a different show. Welcome.

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** Thank you. Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman Moser and distinguished members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. I'm Richard Meginnis, spelled R-i-c-h-a-r-d M-e-g-i-n-n-i-s, and I've been selected to serve as District 1 Commissioner for the state-- Nebraska State Highway Commission. I appreciate the committee's time for you allowing me to share some of my qualifications as you consider my appointment. I was born and raised in Lincoln. Lived here all my life. I did spend 4 years in school at the University of Utah. Previously, I was elected to the Lincoln Public School Board for 8 years and just finished a term with the Lincoln City Council. I've served on many past and current Mayor's infrastructure comprehensive plan committees, and most recently served on the Metropolitan Planning Organization. We've worked on long-range transportation plans a lot with that committee. I have the understanding that transportation means much more than just roads, and I'd like to see agility brought back into-- a little bit into this commission. District 1 consists of 13 counties from David City all the way to Falls City. And it's roughly-- the district is from the Missouri River on the east and about 13 miles west of Seward on the west. And then you go from south of the Platte River all the way to the Kansas state line. So it's basically in the southeast corner of the state of Nebraska would be my district. It's an honor to have been appointed by-- to this position by Governor Pillen and I ask you to consider approving my appointment as District 1 State Highway Commissioner. Thank you again for your time.

**MOSER:** OK. Do we have questions for the-- Senator Bostelman.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you. Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you, Mr. Meginnis, for being here. So you would be the commissioner where I live. I live by Brainard by David City. Have you had an opportunity to attend any of the commissioners' meetings before now?

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** Yes, I've attended two, one here in Lincoln and then one in Holdrege.

**BOSTELMAN:** And how did you think those went?

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** It was interesting. There's a lot to learn. I've had a lot of-- talked with some of our other commissioners, and we need to be a little more involved in a little better transparency. And a big

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part of what I've taken out of this is it's my job to really be a conduit between the Department of Roads and the members in our district. So I take that part really seriously and get out and make sure everyone is aware of what's going on with the Department of Roads.

**BOSTELMAN:** Sure. There is one issue that's coming up that, that is not a bad thing. It's something we've been working on for a while just so you know, if you have heard already, you probably have so, in Morris Bluff and North Bend, the highway, the bridge there, the levee was washed out back in the flood. And the highway was, was-- water went across the highway. So we have an issue with that. So we're trying to figure out how to fix that. So that might be something you'll hear about if you haven't heard about it already. We're just trying to figure out how to get a levee system, something put back in so we don't lose that road because if we lose that road and bridge it was the only one that we could get across during the flood from Iowa to Grand Island. So it's an important, important part. Just a heads up for you.

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** Well, thank you.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you for your willingness to serve.

**MOSER:** Senator Brandt.

**BRANDT:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you, Mr. Meginnis, for your past service and, and hopefully future service here. How far west does your district go?

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** It goes about 13 miles west of Seward, and then it's direct north and south.

**BRANDT:** So you would have Jefferson and Saline and-- but you don't have--

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** Part of Cass.

**BRANDT:** --you wouldn't have Thayer or Fillmore County.

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** I don't think so.

**BRANDT:** OK. What do you think the condition of our rural highways are outside of Lincoln? I mean, obviously, you worked a lot in Lincoln, but I'm sure you've traveled southeast Nebraska. What's your opinion?

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**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** I, I think they're in fairly good shape, actually. Most of them are. There's a lot of updating that needs to be made to a lot of our highways and they're working on them. You know, a little wider shoulders for instance. So make it a little safer on some of the roads. We've got issues, I know in Lancaster County and most of the counties and southeast Nebraska bridges. I mean, that's probably the number one safety issue right now that we need to look at. But overall, I mean, the roads are not in awful shape. It's just we got the maintenance, ongoing maintenance and keeping them up is, is just a lot to do.

**BRANDT:** It is. All right. Thank you.

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** You bet. Thank you, Senator.

**MOSER:** Other questions? Senator DeKay.

**DeKAY:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Mr. Meginnis, going off of what Senator Brandt asked you with the condition of our highways and, and new building projects and stuff, how do-- how do you see how they should be funded?

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** The funding is always going to be the, the big thing and how you go forward and how you prioritize. And that's part that I'm learning more on and will get deeply involved in. The-- yeah, it's the whole road system and the way it's done is you need to be a little more-- actually, I keep saying agile. I did that with the school board. We're not flexible. We don't just bend one way. You need to be able to go up, down, sideways and move with the changing times, especially on the financing end of it. That will be changing over the years.

**DeKAY:** OK. Thank you.

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Other questions? All right. Thank you very much.

**RICHARD MEGINNIS:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Appreciate your appearance today. Is there anyone here to speak in support of Mr. Meginnis? Anyone here to speak in opposition to Mr. Meginnis? Anybody here to speak in the neutral for Mr. Meginnis? OK, that'll close our interview with Mr. Meginnis, and we'll move on to David Copple. Mr. Copple, if you would please come forward.

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**DAVID COPPLE:** Good afternoon. My name's--

**MOSER:** Welcome.

**DAVID COPPLE:** --my name's David Copple, spelled D-a-v-i-d C-o-p-p-l-e. I am currently on the Highway Commission and have served there for the past several years. In 2023, I was the chairperson of the Highway Commission. I'm a graduate of the University of Nebraska with an undergraduate degree in economics, business administration. Graduated from the University of Nebraska Law College in 1983. I practice law in-- with offices both in Norfolk and in Omaha, Nebraska. I represent District 3. District 3 is essentially the northeast corner of the state. It includes--

**MOSER:** Columbus.

**DAVID COPPLE:** --Columbus and it goes as far west as Albion, up to the Missouri River, Yankton, Cedar County, and then over to South Sioux City down to West Point. And just south of West Point is where the break is for District 3 and then back over. I've enjoyed serving as a highway commissioner. I view my role as one of the listening to the citizens who live in my district. And if they have issues or complaints, I try to either direct them to the appropriate person at the Department of Roads or I try to initiate communication so that those issues can be handled. As to the question about condition of the roads. I think what I've learned in my tenure on the commission is that it is a constant challenge to maintain and keep the roads in, in good repair and also a challenge to try to find funding relative to new road projects. Right now in District 3, there is a push and has been a push for several years to get 275 between Norfolk and Omaha concluded. There's Highway 30 that goes east of Columbus that connects to Fremont. It's in the process of being finalized. There's also Highway 81 that goes from Norfolk to Columbus and then south from Columbus to York. That portion of 81 is outside of my district, but I know that those are very important to the citizens in, in those areas. It is part of the, the agreement that the citizens of Nebraska and the Legislature made back when the expressway, expressway concept was designed.

**MOSER:** 1988.

**DAVID COPPLE:** That's right. Thank you. I have been-- I testified before Senator Moser's committee last year in support of the bonding legislation that the department and the Governor had proposed. And I

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think-- I, I agree with that legislation. I think it's a good piece of legislation that the Legislature passed, provides another vehicle for funding. You are seeing some of the benefits of your work now with the Build Nebraska Act and those funds becoming available so that projects can be built. I am of the opinion that the director of the department and her staff and employees work extremely hard to provide a comprehensive road system for the citizens of the state of Nebraska. And I know that they continue to look for ways to improve, and they also look for ways, new and creative ways, to arrive at financing so that these projects can be done. I will say that in my span as having served on the-- on the commission, the, the Federal Department Highway, Highway agency and the state of Nebraska have, in my opinion, developed a very good working relationship and have found ways to try to make processes more streamlined. That includes environmental approval issues and other issues that arise when you're trying to build roadway systems.

**MOSER:** OK. Very good. Thank you. Questions? Let's start with Senator Fredrickson.

**FREDRICKSON:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Mr. Copple, for being here and for your service so far and willingness to continue to serve. Can you maybe share briefly, given that you have been serving on the-- on the board, like, what are your-- what do you sort of see as your top priorities should you be confirmed again?

**DAVID COPPLE:** Well, the top priority is to listen to what the citizens and the counties that I represent and to make sure that those concerns or thoughts and ideas are conveyed to the department. That's number one. Secondly, I'm not the Legislature. I'm not the Department of Roads to establish policy. I'll leave that to you folks and to the Governor. But I think it's vital that we have a road system that connects both urban Nebraska and rural Nebraska. I live in Norfolk. I see the effects from both urban and rural, and I think it's critical that we have a transportation system that is developed and a roadway system that's developed to keep those, those areas connected.

**MOSER:** OK.

**FREDRICKSON:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Senator DeKay.

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**DeKAY:** Thank you. You mentioned it briefly. What are your thoughts for improvement on Highway 81 going north out of Norfolk to the South Dakota border?

**DAVID COPPLE:** I'll, I'll answer it this way, Senator. I go to a number of functions and gatherings in northeast Nebraska in specific, Pierce, Madison County. And I hear all the time that 81 between Norfolk and Yankton should be "four-laned." I understand that that is a goal or objective for certain individuals. I also recognize the economic realities and constraints that the department has with respect to road projects. So am I in favor of it? Yes. Do I understand that there are other projects that also need to be built, and there are limited amounts of economic resources? Yes. If, if we could all wave a magic wand and build a complete system out. That'd be wonderful. But we have to do it step by step. And I think the director has a very good grasp of how to approach that.

**DeKAY:** Well, I mean, take a-- take away the part of worrying about if it's a four-lane or not, that part of the improvement process that I think we also need to look at is per capita amount of deaths and injuries on specific intersections within that stretch of highway. And I'm just wondering if there's any talk about improving those intersections for visibility sake or anything else?

**DAVID COPPLE:** My experience on the commission is that the department is very sensitive to safety. That's one of their primary objectives. And my experience is that when those issues are brought to the department, their engineers and their staffing people take extraordinary needs to try to find resolution in order to solve some of the issues that present themselves. For example, on 81 South out of Norfolk to Columbus at the Humphrey intersection, there were a significant number of motor vehicle accidents that involved personal injury or death. And the department listened to the voices that were concerned. Many people wanted to build an overpass. The problem with building an overpass at that intersection was the cost to do that was, if my recollection is right, is \$10 million or more. And so the economic prohibited that, but they came up with a creative solution that's commonly referred to as a J-turn. And while some people don't necessarily think it's most convenient, the studies that have been presented to the commission by the department shows that those J-turns are very effective in, in reducing accidents and personal injuries or death.

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**DeKAY:** That's I was going to ask you and you alluded to it-- answered it how the, the safety of the J-turns, especially when you have semis doing--

**DAVID COPPLE:** Yeah.

**DeKAY:** --180s in those intersections.

**DAVID COPPLE:** And I know-- I know that some people, primarily people involved in the trucking industry, and Jim can probably address that. He's involved in that industry. But I know people that are involved in the trucking industry and in agriculture dealing with semi trucks, I know that they have concerns about it. With respect to the 275 project, that is right now in the process, there was a public meeting held in Wisner. I was contacted by two individuals who expressed concerns as to those, those J-turns. And I know that the department met with one of those individuals and other members of the community who were concerned about that. And I, I know the department is looking at ways to try to accommodate their concerns, but also accommodate safety and in the standards that they're required to build, build the projects at.

**DeKAY:** I was always curious because I travel that road a lot. I was always curious about the speed going through there, which is down to 60 miles an hour, but there's still the time element that it might take for a semi to make that 180 there on the highway and slow things down, how that impacted the rate of accidents.

**DAVID COPPLE:** I think-- I think those are all issues that the department and the director takes into consideration when they're trying to do their planning and their engineering. They're extreme-- my experience is that the Department of Roads director and her staff are extremely interested in trying to provide a safe, good, efficient road system for the, the state and the citizens of the state.

**DeKAY:** Thank you.

**DAVID COPPLE:** You're welcome.

**MOSER:** Senator Brandt.

**BRANDT:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you, Mr. Copple, for your service on this. Yeah, the J-turn is, is kind of a interesting--

**DAVID COPPLE:** It's the hot button right now.

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**BRANDT:** It, it is. And so I've got 81 South from York to the Kansas border. We have a situation in Hebron where multiple people have been killed and it's a very unusual intersection. And the, the multiplier on this is the fact that if the speed limit is 65 or 70, people are doing 80. OK? And I've seen some reluctance on dropping the speed limit through those towns to make it just a little more safer. Because what happens is we have a lot of people going from a standing start at these intersections, and particularly this one intersection that comes to mind, and you've got a very steep hill down both sides with curves where you can't see everything. And if you're on a John Deere tractor pulling an auger, or you're on a combine and the dealership's on the other side of the road, you're kind of a sitting duck even with the J-turn. So, I mean, I, I guess I would like to see a little more open mindedness possibly. And I know we respect the engineers. Do you have an opinion on that?

**DAVID COPPLE:** I'm not an engineer. I'm an attorney by profession. I've always found it most appropriate to speak with the director, to speak with the engineers and voice my concerns. And if that's a concern that you have, I invite you to send me an email and I will certainly take that to the director and her staff so that it can be discussed. I know that they're constantly looking at ways to make it safer, to make the road system better, given the economic restraints that, that we all face. As you know, with the continuing resolution at the federal level that makes it difficult for the state to try to plan certain things because of the unknown or the uncertainty of those continuing resolutions. But I'll be happy to take your concern of that to the director and share with her the, the concerns that you-- that you expressed today.

**BRANDT:** All right. Thank you.

**DAVID COPPLE:** Certainly.

**MOSER:** Other questions? Seeing none, thank you for your testimony--

**DAVID COPPLE:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** --your willingness to serve. Anybody here to speak in support of David Copple? Is there anyone here to speak in opposition to David Copple? Is there anyone to speak in the neutral capacity for David Copple? Seeing none, that'll close the interview with Mr. Copple and bring us up to James Kindig. Please come up.

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**JAMES KINDIG:** Good afternoon,--

**MOSER:** Greetings. Welcome.

**JAMES KINDIG:** --Senator Moser and the distinguished members of the Transportation and Communications [SIC] Committee. I'm James Kindig, J-a-m-e-s K-i-n-d-i-g. I've been selected for my third term now with the District 4 Highway Commission. I-- I've lived in the district all my life. I grew up on a farm west of Hastings. Graduated from Hastings Senior High and attended Hastings College. I've been in distribution-- food distribution business all my life. My last 35 years with Cash-Wa Distributing. Basically, the VP of sales. Prior to that, I had a distribution company of my own out of Grand Island for 15 years. So I've been in the trucking business for a long, long time. The last 4 years, I oversaw distribution with Heartland out of Omaha Food Bank, and we distributed food boxes. Started with the Farmers to Families Program back in the COVID days. And I distributed and, and oversaw the distribution to 44 food banks and/or pantries in outstate Nebraska. I-- I've attended several seminars on the Transportation Advisory Board, and I'm an elder in the church. I have lived in Kenesaw, Nebraska for over 30 years. I'm married and, and have 3 daughters and 6 grandchildren. District 4 has 17 counties. It's-- the north would be from Ord north to south Superior, Red Cloud, west to Kearney and east to York, and Fullerton area. So it encompasses all 17 counties. There's 110 miles of Interstate, I-80, and 138 miles of expressway. We have 1,709 centerline miles of highway and 623 bridge links that equal 20 feet or more in length in, in our district. Actually, District 4 has the most lane miles of any district in the state. There are many projects for the upcoming year and beyond and 3 that I'm really excited about and coming under the Build Nebraska Act, one is the Hastings southeast U.S. 6 that probably within the next 2 or 3 years, hopefully, will be starting. And the one that I think really needs to be done is the U.S. and it's being let now, I believe, the U.S. 30 West in Grand Island. If you've ever been to Grand Island, Highway 30, going west out of town from 281 really needs to be a divided highway. And that's what's going to happen. And I guess the, the, the last one and, and, this was a vision in 1988 with the expressway, and we're still waiting to get this project underway from, from York to Columbus. And that's a, a, a project, in my opinion, really needs to be done. If you've ever traveled that area, you watch from 81 Expressway from Kansas to York, the amount of traffic and the truck traffic. I-80 and that expressway has lots of trucks, as we well know. If you've ever taken Highway 30 east of Grand Island to Central City and on up to Columbus, that's a two-lane highway that is almost scary

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to be on, in my opinion, a lot of times. I really believe if we ever get the North-South Expressway complete and if we complete from York to Columbus, I think you're going to see a lot of semi traffic diverted from Highway 30. You're going to also see the ones coming up 81 that then head east from York up through Omaha and I-29 to head north. If we can ever get that completed, you're going to see a lot of truck traffic quit going through the Omaha area and go straight north and just keep right on going. Once they hit Yankton, they can go over through Vermillion over to I-29 and up. And, and we really need in Nebraska that North-South Expressway. In conclusion, it's an honor to be appointed and to serve. And I can tell you I've learned a lot, I've met a lot of great people, and this is a great state to live in.

**MOSER:** Questions? Senator DeBoer.

**DeBOER:** Thank you, Senator Moser. First of all, I will say it's always great to see another Bronco, so. I'm also a Hastings College alum.

**JAMES KINDIG:** OK.

**DeBOER:** What would you say, having served on this now for a number of years, what would you say is the greatest challenge that you all face? What's the biggest concern or challenge that you have in the upcoming few years?

**JAMES KINDIG:** Well, you know, as we well know, money is a big concern. If we had plenty of money, we could do a lot of things that we're talking about and the things that we've got set up, so. We do need to have better funding. One of the things that's happened, and, and this-- the inflation and the cost has just kept going up. Now this year, I know when I talked to our district engineer, Wes, all the districts had to take 15% of what they had set to do this year. How do-- they had to delete 15% because of the, the funding and so forth. And we've got various ways of funding. You know, it's like anything else, if you're going to increase funding, you're going to increase taxes. And we really don't want to do that. On the other hand, a lot of our fuel tax, you know, people are buying fuel here. They're coming right through Nebraska. So that's one way to increase a, a little if there was.

**DeBOER:** OK. Thank you.

**MOSER:** Senator Bostelman.

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**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you, Mr. Kindig, for being here. What's your experience as far as the interaction between the commission and the public, especially at your hearings when you have them either in Lincoln or across the state? How is that?

**JAMES KINDIG:** Well, our public hearings, we've had, had great participation from the public, and I, I think they're great. I'll tell you, the, the Department of Transportation they do a great job of setting up displays and people ask questions. When, when, the public leaves they know exactly what the state's doing. And we hear a lot of things, and that does change a lot of times of what we're going to do. Those public meetings are important. As far as me, I-- I've had a lot of discussions with a lot of people and I, I try to be like a salesman to them. I, I, I try to help them any way I can, and I consult Wes and we get our heads together and try to come up with a solution. And I've mediated in a lot of situations with a lot of the public. There's the right-of-way that we-- problems that we've had in Grand Island. I think we've mitigated most of those. But I was instrumental in probably 3 or 4 of them of meeting with them one on one and coming up with a resolution.

**BOSTELMAN:** So the next question would be, since you've served, I think is, you said, your third?

**JAMES KINDIG:** Well, it would be my third. I've been 12 years.

**BOSTELMAN:** Right. So obviously we've had different directors over that time. So each has their own management style as they come and go--

**JAMES KINDIG:** Right.

**BOSTELMAN:** --which we understand. How do you see the commission interaction with the department or with the director or others within that? How does that-- how does that transpire? How does that work? What's that-- do you think you have an impact on decisions that they do or is that not your purpose?

**JAMES KINDIG:** Well, we've always had a good relationship with all the directors. Vicki Kramer, she's a very sharp individual, and I think she's bringing some things that maybe we never quite ever addressed completely. As far as the commissioners and the department, you know, our, our function is basically to work with the public and, and try to be the conduit, if you will, between the public and the Department of

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Transportation. And that's basically what we do. And, and I think that serves a great purpose.

**BOSTELMAN:** OK. Thank you.

**JAMES KINDIG:** You bet.

**MOSER:** Senator Brandt.

**BRANDT:** Yeah. I promise this will be a short question. Thank you for your testimony today and I guess a couple of things. One, you're from a farm. You have a lot of counties. So this last year, the state of Nebraska, particularly in southeast, went through a tremendous drought. And one of the things I hear a lot of things about are haying of right-of-ways. Is there a way to improve what Nebraska does today on, on how we allocate who gets those right-of-ways and go to a model like Kansas, where the adjacent landowner doesn't have to pay a fee to put that grass up for his own cattle or gives it to, maybe, a neighbor or a friend to put up?

**JAMES KINDIG:** You know, I'm not real familiar with, with the right-of-way and the haying, but I do know on lots of instances Wes has gotten involved with those issues and we've granted the-- what do I want to say-- the right to be able to use-- utilize that for haying and so forth. So, so I think it's in place. If, if there's a problem or something, have them call me and I'll get them in touch with Wes and we'll come up with a resolution. I know about 5, 6 years ago I was involved in one and we actually got it resolved and some kind of a, a grant was issued to take care of that to handle that.

**BRANDT:** All right. Thank you.

**JAMES KINDIG:** You bet.

**MOSER:** All right. Thank you very much for your testimony.

**JAMES KINDIG:** Um-hum. Thank you.

**MOSER:** Are there supporters here to testify for Mr. Kindig? Anybody to testify in support? Is there anyone to testify in opposition to Mr. Kindig? Anyone to testify in the neutral? OK. Thank you. That'll close our discussion of Mr. Kindig and move us on to Greg Wolford. Would you please come forward? Welcome.

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**GREG WOLFORD:** Good afternoon, Chairman Moser and members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. My name is Greg Wolford, G-r-e-g W-o-l-f-o-r-d, and I am-- I've been selected to serve as representative for District 7 on the Highway Commission. I live in McCook and I have served on the Highway Commission since 1999. I am a professional engineer, and I am a partner in an engineering and architectural firm in McCook. I am also a member of the Board of Directors of the McCook Economic Development Corporation. District 7 covers the 13 counties in southwest Nebraska, with Kearney and Franklin counties on the east and the Colorado border on the west and Kansas border on the south. It has been an honor to have been nominated by Governor Pillen and I ask that you consider approving my appointment for District 7. I'm here to answer any questions.

**MOSER:** Questions? Senator Bostelman.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you, Mr. Wolford, for being here today. An Air Force graduate I see and service was?

**GREG WOLFORD:** I served there. I did not graduate. I'm a University of Nebraska graduate.

**BOSTELMAN:** Oh, OK. Do you have any, I guess, over, you know, the same questions I'd asked before, you know, over the experience, over the time you've had, communications with the public, commission hearings. I guess to take it one step further in the sense that is there something we could do-- we should be doing better as far as trying to reach out to the community, trying to reach out to people across the state, when you have hearings in certain areas or just trying to get information out to let them know they should contact you or others?

**GREG WOLFORD:** The Department of Roads spends over \$600 million every year on new projects in Nebraska. And every project they do touches somebody's property. I think the commission-- I believe the commission was put in place to make sure that the citizens are protected. There is an opportunity, anytime you're, you're an agency that large to run roughshod over our citizens. And it's our job to see that that does not happen. I do think the DOT has done an excellent job in that manner. I do believe they listen to the commission, and they do listen to the citizens. I've had citizens that tell me that what's the point of testifying? They won't listen to me anyway. But every time I've seen a citizen comment on a project, the engineers have paid attention. They've made accommodations where they can, where it's

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feasible every time. So I, you know, that to me, is, is our primary job. That's why this commission is in place.

**BOSTELMAN:** And your-- the work that you do now, private work yourself, are you-- what's your employment or your own company or--

**GREG WOLFORD:** It's my own company. Yes.

**BOSTELMAN:** And it's in-- and it's in the two--

**GREG WOLFORD:** It's in McCook.

**BOSTELMAN:** --and it-- but, I mean, is it engineering, is it--

**GREG WOLFORD:** It's engineering and arch-- yes. And I--

**BOSTELMAN:** And do-- OK.

**GREG WOLFORD:** When I was first appointed, I am the first, to my knowledge, the only professional engineer to serve on the Highway Commission.

**BOSTELMAN:** Well, I think it's good that you're there. My question would be, is have you, over the years, ran into an area where there may be a conflict of interest and how did you handle it?

**GREG WOLFORD:** When I was first appointed, the Department of Roads at the time asked for an Attorney General's Opinion on whether there was a conflict. The answer was no. But in-- at that time sitting down with the director and the deputies, what is legal and what is right is often different and while it would be legal for me to work for Department of Roads on a contract, the appearance of impropriety is probably not good. And we have had a gentlemen's agreement since then, and my firm would not work for the DOT since then, and I've, I've lived up to it to this point and will continue to do so. So--

**BOSTELMAN:** OK. Thank you.

**GREG WOLFORD:** --I just don't work for the DOT.

**BOSTELMAN:** Understand. Thank you.

**MOSER:** More questions? Thank you very much for your test-- oh, I'm sorry. Senator DeKay.

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**DeKAY:** It's not a question. I-- all I want to say is I appreciate all 4 of you gentlemen coming today, giving us your point of view and your explanations on how you think the commission should work and is working and I appreciate all 4 of you being here today.

**GREG WOLFORD:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Thank you very much. Anyone here to speak in support, support of Greg Wolford? Anybody to speak in opposition to Mr. Wolford? Anyone to speak in the neutral of Mr. Wolford? OK. Thank you. That'll close our gubernatorial reappointments. Thank you, gentlemen, for coming in.

\_\_\_\_\_ : Thank you.

**MOSER:** We're going to switch now to LB1200 for a couple of reasons. For one, Senator Dorn is not here and we want to get this going anyway. Senator DeKay, you're in charge.

**DeKAY:** OK, LB1200. Senator Moser, do you want to open?

**MOSER:** Thank you, Vice Chairman DeKay, and good afternoon members of the Telecommunications and Transportation Committee. My name is Mike Moser. It's M-i-k-e M-o-s-e-r. I represent District 22, which includes Platte County and most of Stanton County. I'm here today to introduce LB1200 on behalf of the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles and the State Patrol. It's the annual update and harmonization bill. It updates statutory references to federal regulations in operation as of January 1, 2024. It also harmonizes and eliminates obsolete language. Specifically, the bill contains the following provisions: numerous sections of the bill update the Nebraska Revised Statutes to conform with federal regulations in effect as of the 1st of January 2024. The updated reference keeps Nebraska in compliance with federal law to ensure that Nebraska does not lose millions in federal highway funds. It makes some changes in the provisions regarding restricted driver licenses and issuing driver licenses to persons turning 21 years of age. It pushes up the date one year earlier to July 1, 2024, that per ton registration fee-- for reduction in the per ton registration fee for commercial motor vehicles. At the request of the Nebraska Trucking Association, there are provisions in the bill to allow commercial trucks with camera systems approved by the Federal Motor Carrier Administration to operate without mirrors. You might call Senator Dorn, contact his office, make sure he knows he's up. The bill also cleans up several obsolete language provisions referencing renewal of commercial learner's permits and seasonal permits, both of which are

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no longer authorized by the statute. There are representatives of the DMV and the Nebraska State Patrol will follow me to testify with better information regarding the bill. I ask for your support in advancing the bill to General File. Happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Thank you, Senator Moser. Are there any questions for Senator Moser? Seeing none,--

**MOSER:** Very kind. Thank you.

**DeKAY:** --will you be here to close?

**MOSER:** Yes, but I'm sure the Department of-- the DMV and the State Patrol pretty will speak.

**DeKAY:** OK. Next-- are there any proponents for LB1200?

**RHONDA LAHM:** Good afternoon, Vice Chairman DeKay and members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. I am Rhonda Lahm, R-h-o-n-d-a L-a-h-m, director of Department of Motor Vehicles. I'm appearing before you today to offer testimony in support of LB1200. I would like to thank Senator Moser for introducing the bill on behalf of the Department of Motor Vehicles. 26 sections of this bill adopt the most recent versions of federal law and regulations in effect as of January 1, 2024. This includes federal regulations applicable to the issuance of commercial driver's license-- licenses, parking regulations for persons with disabilities, low-speed vehicles, manufactured homes, wrecker and salvage dealers, motor carrier registrations, the International Registration Plan, background checks, the Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse, human trafficking, seatbelts, manufacturer warranties, and the United [SIC] Carrier Registration Plan. The substantive change in the federal regulations is the addition of the provisions of the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse in Section 39 of the bill. The bill amends several provisions of law regarding the titling of vehicles. First, is a provision of Section 2, which allows the department to issue a certificate of title 10 years after an estate closes without reopening the estate. Second change is the ability to issue a certificate of title for all-terrain and utility-type vehicles in any county, which is consistent with other motor vehicles. The bill adds a United States government certificate to obtain title to a vehicle to the list of documents that may be submitted with an application for title as proof of ownership. Section 12 changes the term "damaged" to "branded" to

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allow all brands from out-of-state titles to be carried forward to a Nebraska certificate of title. The bill also allows for the issuance of electronic previously salvaged titles for vehicles within the electronic salvage brand. Section 8 of the bill allows an alternative database, the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System, to be checked when inspecting out-of-state vehicles applying for a title in Nebraska. In relation to driver's licenses, LB1200 amends several sections. It permits the department to mail notices of driver's license suspensions for child support violations by regular U.S. mail rather than certified mail, and to be consistent with other notices of suspension. The bill extends from 10 to 30 days, the period of issuance of a driver's license for persons turning 21 years of age. The bill clarifies the points assessed with certain traffic violations will be assessed as of the date of violation. The bill also extends a period of validity for a restricted commercial driver's license from 180 to 210 days in a calendar year. In several sections of the bill, obsolete language related to seasonal permits and the renewal of commercial learner's permits has been deleted. Provisions of the bill allow the director of the DMV to suspend, revoke, cancel, or refuse to issue or renew a registration for an applicant who has committed a violation of the International Registration Act. At the request of the Nebraska Trucking Association, the bill provides for the operation of commercial motor vehicles with a camera system approved by the Federal Motor Carrier Administration in lieu of rearview mirrors. Finally, the bill provides for the per ton registration fee for commercial carriers to be reduced on July 1, 2024, one year earlier than anticipated in relation to our modernization project. Thank you for your time today. I encourage the advancement of LB1200 to General File. I'll be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Your timing is impeccable. Are there any questions? Senator Brandt.

**BRANDT:** Thank you, Vice Chair DeKay. Thank you, Director Lahm, for being here today. Could you clarify for me the certificate of title after 10 years on the estate? What, what are we running into there that we need that language?

**RHONDA LAHM:** OK, so-- I actually have a real-life scenario for that.

**BRANDT:** I'd love to hear it.

**RHONDA LAHM:** So we had an individual who owned a 1994 Cadillac in fair condition valued at approximately \$2,400. The owner passed away in

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2012. The estate closed in 2013. In 2023, the daughter discovered the car was still sitting on the farmland and wanted to register it. But because it was closed, the use of an affidavit [INAUDIBLE] was not available since the PR had been appointed. So they had to reopen the estate and that, that cost them, with attorney fees and court costs, \$3,000 to reopen that estate to get the vehicle titled. And if we could have had this language, we could have just titled it for them without them incurring those additional expenses.

**BRANDT:** So if I-- let's use this scenario. I live on a farm. Grandpa's been gone for 20 years. He's got this old pickup, been sitting in the weeds for 20 years. Would I qualify to get a title for that?

**RHONDA LAHM:** So the 10 years is the minimum. So, yeah, I mean, if-- after an estate has been closed for 10 years and on. So, yeah, I believe you would. I will double check and get back to you for sure.

**BRANDT:** OK. But I guess the scenario that I can see is a lot of these older vehicles that are sitting in the weeds now would become eligible for title, would they not?

**RHONDA LAHM:** Well, they're, they're still going to have to meet the rest of the requirements for title of the vehicle. I mean, the ownership and the risk and things for title. They'll get titled if they meet the rest of the statutory requirements for title.

**BRANDT:** Which would be? Are there a lot?

**RHONDA LAHM:** There's a host of things.

**BRANDT:** OK, I'll, I'll look them up.

**RHONDA LAHM:** [INAUDIBLE]

**BRANDT:** All right. Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Are there any other questions? Senator Bostelman.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Vice Chairman DeKay. Director Lahm, good to see you.

**RHONDA LAHM:** Thank you. Good to see you as well.

**BOSTELMAN:** Question for you. Why are we-- what's the purpose for the second change, the ability to issue certificate of title for

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all-terrain, utility vehi-- type vehicles. What's the purpose for that?

**RHONDA LAHM:** So, currently, you can purchase your car or you can title your car in any county. So for example, me, I live in Cass County, but if I wanted to-- if it was more convenient for me to go to Lancaster County, I could title my car in Lancaster County. So the purpose is to make it consistent with all other motor vehicles, because you can do that now with all the other motor vehicles.

**BOSTELMAN:** So-- OK. So I'm just-- this is just allowing you to title it to whichever--

**RHONDA LAHM:** Right. It would just be treated like every other. I would still have to register my car in Cass County, but I could title it in Lancaster or, for that matter, any county that I chose to. But part of the thing is our, our new registration system allows dealers to title at the time of sale. So if you live in a different county than where you purchase your vehicle and you want to title it at the time that you purchase it, this will allow you to also do that with UTVs and ATVs like you currently can do with a car--

**BOSTELMAN:** OK. Thank you.

**RHONDA LAHM:** --or other motor vehicle.

**BOSTELMAN:** All right. Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Are there any other questions? Senator Cavanaugh.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Thank you. Thanks for being here, Director Lahm. It's nice to see you.

**RHONDA LAHM:** Thank you.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK. Explain this to me like I'm a 44-- 45-year-old woman who has no idea what we're talking about, because that's how I feel right now. This is 102 pages--

**RHONDA LAHM:** Yes.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** --and so there's a lot to try and track in here. And I, I didn't quite understand your explanation to Senator Brandt. What is the reason that we would need to title a vehicle after an estate has closed 10 years in the future?

**RHONDA LAHM:** So if they didn't get the ownership transferred before the estate closed, then the person who could transfer that ownership is obviously not living and who they've designated this personal representative that's not no longer valid.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK.

**RHONDA LAHM:** So there's nobody that we-- that has the authority to sign or to transfer the ownership of the vehicle. And so allowing us the ability to do that, we'll let these people-- we'll let them show us paperwork to do that without having to pay to open an estate and go to a court proceeding to have the same thing done as the paperwork they're going to show at court to show they should be able to transfer the title.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** But the estate has been closed for 10 years before they can do that?

**RHONDA LAHM:** It-- you mean what-- so the question is why couldn't they do it--

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Like, why, why, why--

**RHONDA LAHM:** --at 5 years or whatever?

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Or at 1 year.

**RHONDA LAHM:** So I think-- well, part of that has to go-- we want to make sure that-- I think that some of the financial people have an interest in that as well. But to make sure that there's not outstanding liens, whatever, on the vehicle before we transfer ownership.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Is is a-- like a standard practice? And, of course, this is not within your purview necessarily, but is it a standard practice when an estate-- to wait 10 years after an estate closes for all types of transfers like this?

**RHONDA LAHM:** No, most of them don't have-- I mean, there's a lot of transfers that happen when you have-- an estate closes, of course,--

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Yeah.

**RHONDA LAHM:** --with property. But normally it's all taken care of at that time. But-- and what we usually see is an older vehicle that was

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sitting, and now they've decided they want to title it or register it. It happens 2 to 3 times a month.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** And prior to 10 years, they-- what do they do? Under--

**RHONDA LAHM:** Prior to 10 years, they would have to use the process with the courts.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** So we're eliminating the court process after a 10-year lapse.

**RHONDA LAHM:** Yeah. And-- yeah, and we could-- I mean, we could talk about a different time frame if you are more comfortable with a different time frame.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** I'm just trying to understand--

**RHONDA LAHM:** Yeah, we just--

**M. CAVANAUGH:** --what is happening.

**RHONDA LAHM:** --we just wanted to make sure that we're not transferring a title or transferring ownership that somebody could potentially still have a vested interest in.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK.

**RHONDA LAHM:** And in, in that period of time.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** And I assume not much to people thinking otherwise. I am not an attorney in my family so I don't actually know. But if an estate is in probate, that would mean that the estate is still open?

**RHONDA LAHM:** Right.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK.

**RHONDA LAHM:** My under-- that would be my understanding. Yes.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** I'm just going to, like, look over at you. OK. Thank you.

**RHONDA LAHM:** Um-hum.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Are there any other questions?

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**RHONDA LAHM:** Intent. Yes.

**DeKAY:** Senator Bosn.

**BOSN:** I'm going to try and help. Part of it also is the value of the car after 10 years makes the process of getting that done through an attorney--

**RHONDA LAHM:** More expensive than the value.

**BOSN:** --more expensive than the value of the car. So if it costs \$3,000, in your example, to get the title through the court process for a \$2,500 vehicle, that's not a gift that you got through the estate. That's a cost, right? Whereas, in 3 years or 2 years, it may be a \$20,000 car. And while I don't disagree, I, I understand her concern is why do we make people do that? There's interceding interests that other parties may have that make that difference. Is that fair to say?

**RHONDA LAHM:** Yes. You're so much more eloquent than me. Thank you.

**BOSN:** Well, I don't know about that.

**DeKAY:** OK. Any others? Thank you.

**RHONDA LAHM:** Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Any other testifiers for proponent?

**MIKE MAYTUM:** Vice Chairperson DeKay and members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee, my name is Mike, M-i-k-e, Maytum, M-a-y-t-u-m. I'm a lieutenant assigned to the Carrier Enforcement Division, and I'm here today on behalf of the Nebraska State Patrol to testify in support of LB1200. When the United States Congress passed the Motor Carrier Safety Act, emphasis was placed on states' adoption of uniform safety measures, with the ultimate goal being a reduction in the number of commercial motor vehicle crashes. In order for the state of Nebraska to remain consistent and compliant with these federal requirements, it is necessary to update our commercial vehicle safety regulations annually. This legislation will enable the Nebraska State Patrol to continue enforcing updated Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations and the Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations. Every day, our troopers strive to make highways safe. In fiscal year 2023, the Nebraska State Patrol conducted 28,623 roadside inspections, identifying 15,862 violations of driver requirements and requiring

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that 2,052 drivers be placed out of service. In addition, 7,171 vehicle inspections were conducted, with an average of 2.17 violations discovered per vehicle and 5,042 violations severe enough that the vehicle was placed out of service. The Roadside Inspection Program has enabled the state to establish clear guidelines for commercial vehicle operators, while ensuring a Nebraska State Patrol presence to assist in the correction of operators who have vehicle or driver defects. These guidelines create a significant deterrent effect. In addition to our enforcement efforts, public education is a valuable tool that the agency uses to improve highway safety. In fiscal year 2023, the Carrier Enforcement Division of the Nebraska State Patrol conducted 90 public education and training events across the state, directed at commercial motor vehicle owners and operators in a safe and friendly format. In addition, the Nebraska State Patrol website provides downloadable source material and points of contact to help answer questions about driver requirements, transportation of hazardous materials, and other supplemental information pertinent to commercial, commercial motor vehicle owners, operators, and the public. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of this bill and I'll be happy to answer any questions that you have.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Are there any questions? I do have one quick one.

**MIKE MAYTUM:** Yes, Senator.

**DeKAY:** I was hoping your red light would go off so I could stop a state patrolman one time. [LAUGHTER] But you had 2,052 inspected drivers that were placed out of service. How long were they out of service for?

**MIKE MAYTUM:** It's dependent on the nature of the violation. Most of those driver violations are either tied to the hours of service or to a driver's license issue. If it's a driver's license issue, it could take days, weeks to reconcile. Hours of service are-- they're placed out of service until they're eligible to be back in service so it could be a matter of an hour or 2 or it could be up to 34. It's 34 hours.

**DeKAY:** Now is that due to the condition of the drivers or condition of the vehicles themselves or both?

**MIKE MAYTUM:** In that-- in this statistic, those are driver violations. So that is specific to the person and to the requirements of that driver requirements.

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**DeKAY:** OK. Thank you. Any other questions? Thank you.

**MIKE MAYTUM:** Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Any other proponents?

**KENT GRISHAM:** Good afternoon, Mr. Vice Chairman, members of the committee. My name is Kent Grisham, K-e-n-t G-r-i-s-h-a-m, and I appear today as the president and CEO of the Nebraska Trucking Association. For reference, the NTA is one of the largest trucking associations in the country, with about 900 members representing motor carriers in Nebraska of all sizes and types. Our members range from 1-truck owner operators to great national carriers such as Crete Carrier and Werner, from farmers and ranchers to healthcare systems, and pretty much everything in between. Trucks alone carry more than 88% of all manufactured goods in the state and more than 73% of all commodities. In Nebraska, about half of all of our communities receive everything they need by truck alone. No rail, air cargo, pipelines, marine, just trucks. With that picture of essentialness of trucking, I want to be on record today expressing my support and appreciation for our Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles. We consider Director Lahm and her staff as partners in the critical mission of trucking. The NTA assists thousands of trucking companies every year with a variety of tack. So I can say with personal experience that the DMV in Nebraska operates in a culture of service and dedication to keep the trucks rolling. That said, I am here to lend the trucking industry support to LB1200. Specifically, we need the provisions found in Sections 50 and 51 on pages 91 and 92 of the bill. These sections of the bill reference and update to the statutory requirements for rearview mirrors and side view outside mirrors on both sides of the truck where the vehicle is constructed, so that the rearview may not have a clear view of the vehicle because of trailers. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has approved the use of rearview cameras instead of outside mirrors. These cameras have been in use on the Interstate Highway System nationwide for the last 5 years, including Interstate 80, right through Nebraska. The issue before you today in Sections 50 and 51 of LB1200 will allow them on all roads within the state of Nebraska. The camera systems approved so far by FMCSA provide a wider field of vision to the rear and add to the aerodynamic properties of the truck compared to currently sized right-side and left-side cab mirrors. However, we need to ask that you amend Section 50 of LB1200 by not making the changes to Section 60-6,253 of the Nebraska statutes. This specific section relates to a rearview mirror, which is mounted in the center dashboard area of a vehicle, like a pickup or

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passenger car, where there is no trailer or load obstructing the rear view. That update we ask you to approve then, is the language in the bill which is found in Section 51. I thank you for your time. Be happy to answer any questions. And very briefly, I did add one little thing to your packet. You may be interested to know how many motor carriers you represent in your home districts. All combined, all of your districts represent 1,478 motor carriers that employ 6,175 drivers and they pay taxes and fees on 6,278 trucks. Thank you very much.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Are there any questions? See-- go ahead.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you. Thank you, Vice Chairman DeKay. The last portion here of the change in that memo, that's been given to Chairman Moser?

**KENT GRISHAM:** It, it has and we discussed it as well with the committee legal counsel and that's why we wanted to bring it up today.

**BOSTELMAN:** All right. Thank you.

**KENT GRISHAM:** Yes.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Any other questions?

**KENT GRISHAM:** Thank you all.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Any other proponents for LB1200? Seeing none, any opponents to LB1200? Seeing none, anybody testifying in the neutral position? Also seeing none. And there were no public comments recorded. With that, Senator Moser, you can have your closing.

**MOSER:** Well, this is a necessary cleanup bill that we need to do exactly how we format it is up to the committee and the DMV to work those little details out, but. And I hope you don't have any questions for me because I don't know near much-- as much about it as the DMV does, so. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions?

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Any questions? Seeing none, this closes the hearing on LB1200. Thank you.

**MOSER:** Thank you. No, that's right, LB1180 is Dorn.

**FREDRICKSON:** No, it's 08.

**DeBOER:** It's 08.

**MOSER:** We swapped them. What's it supposed to be?

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**LYNNE WOODY:** LB1108.

**MOSER:** LB1108. Oh, yeah. Well, just take a magic marker. You got this. Do you have a magic marker?

**BOSTELMAN:** Just turn it over.

**DeBOER:** Yeah, just flip it over to the inside.

**MOSER:** We had a transposition of numbers on the bill. It's supposed to be LB1108. OK. Now we consider the bill LB1108 by Senator Dorn. Please open on your bill. Tell us all about it.

**DORN:** You bet. Good afternoon, Chairman Moser and members of the committee. My name is Myron Dorn, M-y-r-o-n D-o-r-n. I represent Legislative District 30, which is all of Gage County and a portion of southeastern Lancaster County. I'm here to do-- introduce LB1108. A bit of history. In 2001, Senator Dennis Byars, who also represented District 30, introduced LB191, referred to as the 50 cents for life, to establish an ongoing funding source for Nebraska's Emergency Medical System Operations Fund. The 50 cents is a fee on each motor vehicle registration and generates about \$1.2 million in cash funds. This fee provides a vital source of revenue for a vital program. Emergency Medical Services Practice Act and the Statewide Trauma System Act use our money to help aid the reimbursement of initial and reinstatement testing for EMTs. It is also used to pay for continuing education and so many other vital services for-- put forward under this act. I've given you a handout of the statutes creating the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act, the Legislature's findings and intent. The yellow highlighted portion in 38-1203: The Legislature finds that the emergency medical care is a primary and essential healthcare service and that the presence of an adequately equipped ambulance and trained emergency care providers may be the difference between life and death or permanent disability to those persons in Nebraska making use of such services in an emergency. As many of you know, I have served as a volunteer EMT for 38 years. I can emphatically state that when called to an accident on the roads or a medical emergency in the home, the quality of medical interventions relies on a well-trained, and in the rural areas, a volunteer staff. When a call comes in for aid, volunteer EMTs and EMS leave their jobs or their homes in the middle of the night to help render aid. Last year, I introduced LB415, which would have sought General Fund dollars to support this program. These funds would have-- those funds would have supported this program. In addition, I asked for \$150,000 to

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support the eNARSIS system, which is the Electronic Nebraska Ambulance Rescue Service Information System and the Nebraska State Trauma Registry. These reports go to the state and, in turn, to the national level. The reporting systems are used to improve patient care throughout standardization, aggregation, and utilization of point-of-care emergency services. We improve services by learning from past emergency response. The better care and treatment at the beginning of a medical emergency hopefully results in a better outcome for the patients. I would like you to see a portion of-- I would like to see a portion of this fee increase go towards updating those reporting systems. Nebraska can pride itself on the volunteerism of people across this state. People who are willing to take the time for extensive training, the rigorous testing, and then answering the calls for emergency services which interrupt their workday or family gatherings, their sleep at night. The state needs to do all that it can do to support these volunteers. The Office of Emergency Health Systems is doing their best to provide the necessary financial assistance and training while keeping up to date with reporting requirements the myriad of other functions this office carries out. Increasing the fee on the motor vehicle registration is appropriate since much of the aid rendered by these volunteers occur on our roads across the state. Again, the fee was implemented in 2001 and has not increased. I can't buy a cup of coffee for 50 cents today, but it may help support a volunteer EMT and save a life. I ask for your favorable support of LB1108.

**MOSER:** Thank you. Questions from the committee? Senator Cavanaugh.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Thank you. Thank you, Senator Dorn. I remember your previous bill, and at that time the vehicles that we had-- the state had received a grant to create those vehicles, the training vehicles. Do you remember when--

**DORN:** The ambulances?

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Yes.

**DORN:** Yes.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** So-- and that grant funding was running out. That was kind of the impetus for when you were bringing the bill. Correct?

**DORN:** That-- that's a little bit part of it.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK.

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**DORN:** We did have a bunch of ARPA funding that went towards ambulances and equipment replacement.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK.

**DORN:** Part of what this will help fund also, though, is eNARSIS, they came into being about 15 years ago that we do all electronic recording. Those, those tablets or whatever haven't been updated. As you know with computer systems, they run out. This is also for the training. Right now it depends on who they get to, I call it, instruct the class or whatever. It may be \$1,500 to \$2,000 to have new students take the testing and the amount of time and everything it takes. This would help replenish those funds. There's more things they can do as far as, I call it, acquiring more numbers, getting more people to help. But sometimes the funding is very limited.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** So what I'm, I guess, trying to ask is those, those large training vehicles that we--

**DORN:** Oh, those are SIM trucks.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** The SIM trucks.

**DORN:** Yes.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Would this, this go to support the training that those do--

**DORN:** No.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** --or that's a separate issue?

**DORN:** That's a separate--

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK.

**DORN:** --that's a separate thing.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** I didn't know if I was conflating things or not, so.

**DORN:** That never came about that we got additional funding for that. This is completely separate--

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK.

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**DORN:** --from the SIM trucks. The SIM trucks are a part of the training, though,--

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Right.

**DORN:** --that you can take for-- we, we are required to take 20 to 30 hours every year additional training.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** But there's no funding for the SIM trucks training.

**DORN:** Not in this here. No.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** But we didn't get any.

**DORN:** No, we didn't get any.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** I'm getting lots of head shakes. OK. All right. Thank you so much.

**MOSER:** Toss up. Senator Bostelman.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Chair Moser. Will someone from DHHS be testifying today? Do you have someone--

**DORN:** Yes.

**BOSTELMAN:** --from DHHS?

**DORN:** Yes,--

**BOSTELMAN:** OK. I'll ask--

**DORN:** --someone will be here.

**BOSTELMAN:** OK.

**DORN:** Yes.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you.

**DORN:** And, and someone from the, the Governor's staff, too. They will be here to testify today.

**BOSTELMAN:** OK. Thank you.

**DORN:** So, yeah, others will be. So if you have a technical question, you--

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**BOSTELMAN:** I'll save the questions for them.

**DORN:** Yes.

**MOSER:** Senator Brandt.

**BRANDT:** That was part of my question. On the fiscal note, the \$1.2 million, is that the 50 cent increase or is the \$1.2 million the, the entire dollar?

**DORN:** Right now, and the past several years, that \$1.2 million is what is collected from the current 50 cents we have so this would in addition.

**BRANDT:** So this will be an additional 1.-- so we'll have 2.4.

**DORN:** Roughly, get or take.

**BRANDT:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** OK. Thank you, Senator.

**DORN:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Other supporters of LB1108? Come on up. Welcome.

**CHARITY MENELEE:** Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman Moser and members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. My name is Charity Menefee, C-h-a-r-i-t-y M-e-n-e-f-e-e, and I'm the director at the Division of Public Health within the Department of Health and Human Services, or DHHS. I'm here to testify in support of LB1108, which will increase funding for the Nebraska Emergency Medical System Operations Fund. I would like to thank Senator Dorn for introducing this bill on DHHS's behalf. The Nebraska Emergency Medical System Operations Fund was established in 2001 to carry out the purposes of the Statewide Trauma System Act, Emergency Medical Services Act, and support for the emergency medical services for children's program. The registration fee for this fund has not been increased since its inception in 2001, nor has it been adjusted for inflation and has been below 1% revenue growth for at least the past 5 years. Revenues are insufficient to cover expenses and the program has operated in a deficit for several years. Since 2001, Emergency Medical Services and the Trauma System of Care have grown substantially. Designated trauma centers have increased from 0 to 53, and EMS call volume, demand, and requirements have steadily increased. The proposed increase will allow

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DHHS to maintain staffing to support the Trauma System of Care and Emergency Medical Services, which includes the Critical Incident Stress Management, or CISM, Program. DHHS issues licenses for emergency care providers, emergency medical services, and training agencies, encompassing at least 7 different license types which have regulations governing training requirements, reporting requirements, and enforcement actions. Ensuring the EMS providers and services are licensed timely and EMS services receive required inspections is critical for safeguarding public health and safety. In addition to the licensing functions, DHHS assists with emergency-- the emergency health system in Nebraska to meet operational requirements and improve services. We have also acquired grant funding to provide first responders with AEDs, LUCAS devices, funds for ambulances and equipment, and resources for pediatric transport. In addition to sustaining the division's daily functions, this increased funding will allow the department to partner with stakeholders to address EMS workforce recruitment and retention for both volunteer and paid services. Nebraska has a critical shortage of EMS services able to transfer patients from critical access hospitals to definitive care without waiting for hours or days, which has a negative impact on patient outcomes. This funding will also supplement the cost of issuing licensing-- licenses and reimbursing training costs, ensuring that a predominantly volunteer EMS workforce does not bear this financial burden. Increased funding will allow for better support of the CISM Program, which has experienced growth for each of the past 5 years. This critical service is available to all Nebraska firefighters, EMS, law enforcement, Corrections, dispatch, and hospitals to provide support and assistance with mental health needs brought on by-- I hit my red light, sir, so I-- you have my comments or I can keep going-- OK-- I'm almost finished-- brought on by repeated exposure to high-stress incidents. Growth in this area has resulted in a need for more peer resources and training than the department has been able to provide to peer team members. Finally, the increased funding will allow DHHS to continue supporting trauma-designated hospitals through coordination and development of trauma education and prevention programs, as well as by providing a user-friendly registry. This data allows for assessment of patient outcomes and effectiveness of the EMS and trauma care interventions, ultimately providing the information needed to make quality improvements to both EMS and trauma systems. This type of ongoing quality improvement is critical to ensuring survivability of patients experiencing trauma. We respectfully request the committee advance

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this bill to General File. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I'm happy to answer any questions you have about this bill.

**MOSER:** Senator DeKay.

**DeKAY:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Is this-- how is this money given out? Is that through an application process to the different entities or is it prorated at some point or how is that--

**CHARITY MENEFE:** So, generally, this funding covers several things. A lot of the administrative costs to run the program come out of this funding. We also cover the service and the individual license application fees. That's something that for every other profession that they pay and we, we cover that cost with this as well. We also fund the eNARSIS system out of this that Senator Dorn talked about. It's the other large expense that comes out of this fund. The fund was originally designed and the program was designed for about 17 FTE and we are coding at about 12 right now, and then having the, the data system is the other big piece. We have aid funds that help support the other training dollars we have to have so the people that process those applications for reimbursement for training, which I think is getting to your question, Senator. That's aid dollars, but this fund supports the people who process those and there's a lot of those every month.

**DeKAY:** But-- so funding doesn't come out of here for equipment for ambulances and fire trucks?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** That, that recent funding that I believe you're referencing, sir, were ARPA dollars that went out directly, that was directly to support the services out across the state. Yes, sir.

**DeKAY:** OK. Thank you.

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Yep.

**MOSER:** Senator Cavanaugh.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Thank you. Thanks for being here, Director Menefee.

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Thank you.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Is it-- is it director, doctor?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Director.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK. So you mentioned that you've been operating at a deficit for several years.

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Yes.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** What is that deficit?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Last year, it was about \$300,000.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** And where-- how are you filling that deficit?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** We used general funds.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** General funds.

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Yes, ma'am.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** So do you know how many years you've been at a deficit?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** I know since I've been here for 3 years. I think we said at least the past 5. I can go back if we need to go further than that.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** And I, I appreciate that I might ask you questions that you can't actually answer but we'll try. So if we've been operating at a deficit for so many years, is there a reason that the state agency hasn't come in through the appropriations process and requested that this be funded fully through general funds as part of the DHHS budget?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** I can't speak to those decisions that have been made previously. I know that there has been a lot of movement, I think, in the past. Last year was my first real first year in this role and, and stepping into operations there. And I think that the, the priority was on getting those services and supports out into the community so that, that tracking of those ARPA dollars. That would be my best estimate of those.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** OK. Thank you. Thanks for being here.

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Yeah.

**MOSER:** Senator Brandt.

**BRANDT:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you, Director Menefee. So to follow-up with Senator Cavanaugh. We're going to generate \$1,270,000

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to cover \$300,000 in costs. We're going to have almost \$1 million. Is that just going to sit in the cash account?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** So what will happen is that will-- I mean, I think you called it out. So there will be-- and, and this is what happened originally as well, there would be an influx of, of funds to support at the initial outset. But looking at the growth revenue, that fund will likely decrease over time. In the meantime, I think that we could continue to provide the services that we're providing, that where we are right now, we would likely have to start looking at stopping some of those services [INAUDIBLE].

**BRANDT:** So would your department be opposed to flushing that account every year, any excess be sent out in the form of a check to all EMS services out there to clear the account out to zero?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** I would have to take that back, Senator, that's not been presented to us before.

**BRANDT:** Well, my concern is simply this. We know that the Governor is going after a lot of these cash accounts, and this is being generated by all the people in the state paying their car registration every year. They aren't really intending for it to be used in the General Fund of the state of Nebraska. We really want to see it--

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Same for EMS.

**BRANDT:** --used for EMS services. And if you're underfunded, to do what you need to do. Absolutely, that should have the first cut. But I guess I would like to see it placed somewhere out of harm's way that it can be used for its intended purpose. Would you agree with that?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** I think that we are absolutely on the same page and want to make sure that the funds are available to support the EMS programs.

**BRANDT:** All right. I'll, I'll talk to Senator Dorn about that.

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Thank you.

**BRANDT:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Other questions? Senator Bostelman.

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**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Chair Moser. A few questions, eNARSIS is the first one. I have gone to the CEO-- last 2 CEOs and the Governor saying eNARSIS doesn't work. It's broken. And my understanding is, is that the contract ended on that or was up and that, potentially, when Governor Ricketts was here, and we discussed if there's off the shelf program that maybe Lincoln, Omaha would use them, why don't use that rather than continuing on with what we have. Where are we with the eNARSIS right now? Because the biggest complaint I had when I did the, the survey across the state was it's complicated. It's hard to do. You know, we're not getting any information out of it, the administrators aren't doing anything. So we're paying for and we're administrating an eNARSIS program that's not doing what we need and what's it's intended to do. Where are we? Are we replacing it or where are we?

**CHARITY MENEFE:** So we are-- I believe it's been released in the RFP process for being able to provide updates and getting the feedback that's been provided to us about improving the capabilities of the system no matter what the system is that we ended up using, Senator. We've heard that feedback. I do know that we also have a lot of services. I think a majority, I think all but maybe around 80 have been using the system as it is now. But we do understand that there is additional functionality this-- without funding to support, which would get back to your questions for that system. It would limit the ability for us to make the improvements that we've been hearing about that having sufficient funding, I think that we can absolutely move in that same direction. We've, we've been hearing that feedback as well, and that's our desire to make it more user friendly for our community.

**BOSTELMAN:** Yeah. So I mean, that's-- I think that's-- to me that's one of the important pieces that we haven't fixed--

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Yes, sir.

**BOSTELMAN:** --in the state, as we have a program out there that just doesn't work.

**CHARITY MENEFE:** Yes, sir. And that's probably something, if you don't mind if I interject, sir, that I probably should have brought to you is that is an unknown cost that would be happening over this next year as we're making those improvements so that it's not just \$300,000 for this year likely.

**BOSTELMAN:** So my understanding \$2.4 million-- so we're talking a little more or less is we're talking on this. So how is that going to

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help staffing? And then how much of that is staffing? Because we needed DHHS, you need-- Tim needs, needs additional help. You got one person doing all this work. It's too much for one person. How much is staffing? How much is going out for other-- and maybe some of the other testifiers have some of those answers, too, is, is how much of the money is going to be directed out to our volunteers are out there in [INAUDIBLE] areas?

**CHARITY MENELEE:** So I think a couple of things. I can get you the exact percentage for staffing, Senator, I, I don't have that off the top of my head. But I-- we do have those 12 members [INAUDIBLE] that are doing all of the various activities that I described, that staffing we hope to maintain. Because I think, as you said, there's a lot of value to the work they're doing, and that we want to be able to continue to offer those services. The other big portion is, again, making sure that we are supporting education and training as much as possible across the state, which Senator Dorn talked about, and having a staff to process those training requirements and reimbursements that, that we get on that behalf. The other, honestly, largest chunk of this is for the data system, Senator. But I'll get to the percentages.

**BOSTELMAN:** OK. Thank you.

**CHARITY MENELEE:** Yep.

**MOSER:** Other questions? OK. Seeing none, thank you for your testimony.

**CHARITY MENELEE:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Other supporters of LB1108? Greetings. Welcome.

**EMILY CANTRELL:** Good afternoon, Chairman Moser and members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. My name is Emily Cantrell, E-m-i-l-y C-a-n-t-r-e-l-l. I currently serve as both a member and the chair of the Nebraska State Trauma Advisory Board. In addition to this, I'm a practicing trauma and acute care surgeon representing Region 1 in the Nebraska State Trauma System, which is located on the eastern part of the state. My testimony today is on behalf of the Nebraska State Trauma Advisory Board, but also reflects my own personal beliefs. I come before you today asking for your support of LB1108 being presented to your committee today. As you have heard, this bill allows for an amendment to the Motor Vehicle Registration Act, which would allow for increased funding to the

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Nebraska Emergency Medical System Operations Fund by increasing a small fee on motor vehicle registrations from 50 cents to \$1. This fund would be used to carry out purposes of the Statewide Trauma System Act and the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act, which includes activities related to the design, maintenance, and enhancement of the statewide trauma system, support of emergency medical services, and support of emergency medical services programs for children. This small fee, which has colloquially been referred to as 50 cents for life, was created in 2001 in conjunction with the development of the state trauma system. It has not been increased or adjusted for inflation since its creation. Over the last 20-plus years, the statewide emergency and trauma system has grown exponentially and now supports over 50 state-designated trauma hospitals, 13 trauma rehabilitation centers, and over 420 pre-hospital and EMS agencies. In addition to supporting hospitals and pre-hospital agencies across the state, the Nebraska Emergency Medical System Operations Fund also finances the Office of Emergency Health Systems within the Department of Health and Human Services, which provide centralized leadership, coordinate service delivery, establishes minimum standards of care, designates trauma centers, and ensures system evaluation and refinement. Trauma remains a major public health issue, and despite many advances in medicine, trauma and unintentional injury continues to be a leading cause of preventable death in the United States and in the state of Nebraska. The ability to save lives following traumatic injury requires timely response and adequate resources. Having a well-supported and organized emergency medical system significantly impacts how quickly an injured patient can be reached and assessed in the field, and subsequently transported to the appropriate facility with capabilities to care for his or her injuries. This becomes an even bigger necessity in rural states such as Nebraska, where patients are injured in areas with scarce resources, resulting in higher mortality rates and a higher proportion of deaths on scene when compared to patients with similar mechanisms of injury occurring in more urban areas. In addition to patient care, an effective emergency medical system requires a centralized office that can provide oversight to the system and maintain a data registry. A standardized review of outcomes and data points become performance improvement initiatives for hospital and EMS agencies within that system. This aspect is essential to ensure that standards of care upheld and those injured within that system achieve or receive appropriate care. Furthermore, in a reality that's all too familiar with myself and other trauma providers is the fact that trauma does not discriminate and is often unexpected. It can affect any of us or

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our loved ones at any given time. It also disproportionately effects younger population and remains a leading cause of disability resulting in huge economic and financial consequences for the patient, their community, and the healthcare system. Investment in the state's emergency medical system ensures that you and your loved ones can have the opportunity to receive optimal care in a timely manner promoting the vitality of our beloved state. At its current rate, 50 cents for life fee no longer generates enough income to support the Nebraska Emergency Medical System, which has grown considerably in the last 20 years. In addition, Nebraska's Emergency Medical System is grossly underfunded in comparison to neighboring and geographically similar, similar states. This places our residents and visitors at serious risk of receiving suboptimal and inadequate care should unexpected tragedy strike. Considering this, myself and the Nebraska State Trauma Advisory Board fully support the increase of this fee from 50 cents to \$1 for life and strongly encourage you to consider an even larger fee increase to \$2 for life to allow for ongoing growth and development of the Nebraska Emergency Medical System and ensure residents and visitors are able to receive optimal trauma care across the continuum whenever tragedy strikes. After all, what is your life worth? Thank you for allowing me the privilege to testify today and I will accept any questions.

**MOSER:** Questions? Seeing none, thank you for your testimony.

**EMILY CANTRELL:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Are there more supporters? Welcome.

**RANDY BOLDT:** Good afternoon, Senator Moser, members of the committee. It's been a long time since I sat at the table here and I thank you for having me. I'm Randy Boldt, R-a-n-d-y B-o-l-d-t. I am both a national registry and licensed EMT, but more importantly, I'm a member of the Nebraska Emergency Medical Advisory Board of Directors. And I'd, I'd love to sit here, by the way, and talk to you about the relative issue of the ambulance and trauma and illness, because I think it makes-- it, it certainly doesn't help when you're riding in a truck. And it doesn't help much when you're riding in a truck for a long distance. But I'm here. We have over the years, and I've been serving on this board for going on 10 years now, we've discussed this fund and what it does and the, the administration. And one of the things I just want to point out-- point out, without being redundant, is that the state of Nebraska has declared that emergency medical care is an essential service in the state. It has to be there. If it has to

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be there, it has to be funded. And the only way you do that, obviously, is you chase the money. But, more importantly, what we see in the-- in the whole environment is having data. If we don't know what's going on, we can't shrink the time. Emergency medical services depends on time, scale, and a receptor. That is a hospital receptor. So through ongoing deliberations, we finally found out we need more. We need 50 cents more. And, therefore, I thank you for listening to me, will answer questions, but do support and that is our chairman Dr. James Smith from North Platte and the rest of us support an increase in this fund. Questions, please.

**MOSER:** OK. Thank you. Questions? Senator DeKay.

**DeKAY:** Yeah. I was just wondering, with the current amount of money that you're receiving now, how close are we to covering the bases or where are we falling short at to require more money going forward?

**RANDY BOLDT:** It was mentioned that eNARSIS was a problem, eNARSIS is a problem because it is complicated. But eNARSIS, if it works, it focuses us on the things that need correction and improvement. A little more money, we can find new ways to gather this, this data. We're currently doing it for cardiovascular problems so that we can take a look at and find out how quickly they're being responded to in the field and delivered to the secondary and tertiary care facilities.

**DeKAY:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** More questions? Thank you.

**RANDY BOLDT:** Show him the-- show him the door.

**MOSER:** Good. Yeah. Well, you had a sincere presentation. Thank you. More supporters? Welcome.

**ANGELA LING:** Good afternoon, Chairman Moser and the members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. My name is Angela Ling, A-n-g-e-l-a L-i-n-g. I'm the senior director of Hospital Preparedness and Regulatory Improvement for the Nebraska Hospital Association. I'll also be testifying on behalf of the Nebraska Rural Health Association, along with the work I do at NHA. I'm also a nurse practitioner and worked in rural emergency departments across Nebraska for the last 5 years. I'd like to thank Senator Dorn for introducing LB1108 and continuing to support emergency medical support-- services. EMS is an essential service and plays a critical role in our communities. It is increasingly difficult for ambulance services to

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respond to emergencies in America, especially rural America, due to workforce shortages and a growing financial crisis. There are various models, levels, and pay structures, but when it comes down to it the people are the backbone. To maintain EMS in the state of Nebraska, we need to recruit, retain, and care for our workforce. We have given millions of dollars to other healthcare professions for the exact same reasons. If there is no one on-call for the local ambulance, many patients will not even have the opportunity to receive the high-class care Nebraskans are trained to provide. Increasing the support of tuition reimbursement, continuing education, additional skills training, and offsetting the need for licensure fees of emergency medical personnel is a step in the right direction. The average salary of an EMT in Nebraska is \$21 an hour, and paramedics is \$28 an hour. Remember, that is if they are even paid at all. Rural Nebraska heavily relies on volunteer EMS. If we expect these professionals to volunteer their time, we need to support them in ensuring they are not paying additional money for costly continuing education skills development out of their own pockets. There are many sources from general funds to support nursing scholarships. This fiscal note shows \$1.27 million as a financial impact, which is incredibly low considering other professional support in the state. As a nurse practitioner in rural emergency medicine, I am asking you to please support this legislation for our EMS. My fear is that one day we will be calling 911 and there will be no one to respond or that the response is so delayed that we have missed critical time to save you or your loved one. So while this may sound a bit dramatic, we need to support EMS right now, not push it off another year. Let's not wait until there are tragic stories to get everyone's attention. As a Nebraskan, we deserve to have a functioning and educated staff ready to care for us during an emergency. Thank you and I'll take any questions.

**MOSER:** Senator Bostelman.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you for being here. My question would be, has NHA, rural health board, or others provided this training to the volunteers and not charge them?

**ANGELA LING:** So we work in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services and we're really working as more hospitals are taking on responsibilities with EMS, we're starting to work within this workforce development. So we have pipeline programs that are technically nursing focused, but they're actually healthcare career focused, where we're starting at grades like 3-12, and we're doing after-school programs where we're starting to develop people. So

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that's the recruitment part. We're also working with Tim at DHHS and starting to find ways that we can help with that educational-- providing education for these.

**BOSTELMAN:** And the reason why I ask the question is, is \$1.27 million doesn't go very far.

**ANGELA LING:** Correct.

**BOSTELMAN:** So in order to, to take \$1.27 million and make an impact, we need to have partners.

**ANGELA LING:** Right.

**BOSTELMAN:** So has NHA come, or other hospitals, rural health folks come to-- come to the table, if you will, and say, OK, you've got these funds but we partner with you to provide training to make those funds go further as to where you're not charging for those, or whatever it might be, so that there's an opportunity there to multiply the funds in a sense because I don't think that the funding-- \$2 million, I don't think is going to go near far enough to what, you know, we need to do. But how do we-- have you looked-- you know, the question is how do you look to partner with, with DHHS to make this happen or maybe local departments to make this happen?

**ANGELA LING:** Right, and I think that's-- those conversations are being had. We also are finding that hospitals are doing some interesting work in regards to working with their local EMS and providing the staff to, to support that rig, which in turn they help provide the continuing education for that person as well.

**BOSTELMAN:** Right, and then one thing we did a couple years ago was I think the EMS Board, the state board, changed some, some qualifications with, with the community college with the training for EMTs because it was-- it used to be that you had to have so many calls in an ambulance to go out. Well, there's places in the state, maybe you get 1 or 2 or 3 so they can then go into the hospitals and work in the emergency rooms and there were some real pushback on that. But that was something that was critical, I think, to help those who are going through the classes to be able to meet those requirements. I call them the labs, you know, the practical portion of it to meet those requirements and those are things, I think, that will help too that can partner--

**ANGELA LING:** Yeah.

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**BOSTELMAN:** --to make sure we're doing things. Plus, I think we also change it where you could hire, as you said, those EMTs or paramedics at the hospitals and work there and that was a challenge but I think we got that done, too.

**ANGELA LING:** Yeah, we're definitely--

**BOSTELMAN:** So those are things, I think, that we've done before to help, but it's really the dollars. You're right, dollars aren't there so we got to be creative on how to, to build upon that outside of those dollars by partnering with our hospitals and clinics and that.

**ANGELA LING:** Yes, sir. Agree.

**MOSER:** Other comments? Thank you for your testimony.

**ANGELA LING:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** More supporters for LB1108?

**MICHEAL DWYER:** Good afternoon, Senator Moser-- Chairman Moser, excuse me, and members of the Telecommunications and Transportation Committee. My name is Micheal Dwyer, M-i-c-h-e-a-l D-w-y-e-r, and I'm testifying in support of LB1108 on behalf of the Nebraska State Volunteer Firefighters Association. Thank you to Senator Dorn for introducing LB1108 and to Senator Bostelman for being a tireless supporter of volunteer fire EMS. Thank you. I'm a 40-year active veteran of Arlington Fire and Rescue as a firefighter EMT and a nearly 20-year member of the NSVFA Committee and spent four hours at a fire this morning. So excuse me if I stutter. The report that you have is the third version of the future of EMS in Nebraska. I would encourage you to read all of the pages, but the short version is that provider-- excuse me, calls are up, the number of providers is down. The issues are system wide, the trend is historic, and the current system of emergency medical services in Nebraska is not sustainable. Volunteer fire and EMS is the largest private subsidy of a government program in our nation, saving an estimated \$46.9 billion annually. LB1108 is an important step on what must be a road. If adjusted for inflation, the 50 cents for life would bring us to about 85 cents. I would-- I certainly can promise you that the cost for everything in EMS from education to equipment to ambulances has increased much more than that. Colorado has a similar program, but it increased its rate from \$1 to \$2 in 2009. South Dakota is in the process of spending more than \$20 million on 3 initiatives to shore up their EMS. To reiterate,

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Senator Dorn's point-- excuse me, Senator Dorn's point, we need data. I have privately been pushing for Section 2 of LB415 that he alluded to to give us that data. This report is required within 72 hours by every EMS provider that does a report. I've been assured by Tim Wilson, the director of EMS, and Dr. Smith, chair of the EMS Board, that the funding will go to the new software. And with that, we should be able to provide a report of information that's really, really critical to making decisions going forward. I would argue that without that report, without that information, it will be incredibly difficult for us to make good, informed decisions about EMS going forward. Sooner or later, Nebraska has to pick a horse. At some point, Nebraska will be forced to choose between fully supporting volunteer-- the volunteer EMS model that LB1108 will help us with or support a paid model similar to what Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Minnesota have moved towards. I will fight with my last breath in favor of volunteer EMS because I believe it offers better patient care. However, the state of Nebraska and local jurisdictions if they choose to go to a paid model will spend 400 times more on that than LB1108 offers. And with the Chair's permission, I'd like to finish the paragraph if that's OK. In closing, I would remind the committee of the sacrifices that Nebraska is requiring, if only by default, volunteers to do. I went through CISM 3 times in 2023, the final time on December 30 in response to a horrific accident that cost the life of a community leader, one of our former employees and a dear friend. But we also saved 2 lives that night. All over Nebraska men and women like me and like the people behind me choose to drop everything they're doing and risk their lives for nothing more than the chance to serve their neighbor. But we and the voluntary EMS model need support and LB1108 is a good step in that direction. Thank you and I'd be happy to offer-- excuse me, answer a bunch of questions.

**MOSER:** Questions? Senator Brandt.

**BRANDT:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you for your testimony today. I'm going to go through this report when I get time. Which state has the best EMS system, because you've got a bunch of them listed in here?

**MICHEAL DWYER:** So I will answer that in two parts. One, I was well through this, and my answer to that was that nobody's doing it right. Every state that I studied, and there was 11 in the report, is struggling with the same issues that we've been talking about today. Everybody is shorthanded. And with all due respect to all of the other things that we've been talking about in terms of programs, news flash,

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EMS is done by people. If we don't have people to put hands to a patient, EMS is [INAUDIBLE]. So people is the critical piece. However, I am really encouraged by some of the things that South Dakota is doing. They're investigating telehealth. They have this cool little thing where if I'm struggling in the back of a rig with a patient, I can sort of zoom call to an ER physician and he can, hey, this is what's going on. You might try this. Iowa is experimenting with a new program, and I'll miss the name, but essentially it, it allows people with basic first aid, CPR, and stop the bleed training to respond in front of EMS at a much quicker response time than what typical EMS and our typical response time is 8 minutes out the door before we actually get to the patient. I wish I could tell you a better answer, but in my research, South Dakota is probably the best model. And the good news is geographically they're very similar. But everybody in the country that I studied, EMS is [INAUDIBLE]. Particularly, rural hospital EMS-- rural EMS, pre-hospital EMS, because it's--

**BRANDT:** All right.

**MICHEAL DWYER:** --so dominated with volunteers.

**BRANDT:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Senator DeKay.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Would some of the money that would be generated from this, would this help be able to recruit paid EMS workers and/or volunteers across the state?

**MICHEAL DWYER:** Great question. And I can only answer this directly and honestly, I hope so. We continue to have really good conversations with the department with Tim Wilson and Dr. Smith, and these are good people. But they would be the first to tell you they're not in the recruiting and retention business. That's not what HHS does. I hope that we can come to a, a middle ground that supports everything that the volunteer is doing, specifically paying for all of the education that in many cases we're required to get. But-- and NSVFA is doing some good recruiting and retention stuff. But it's not-- it's, it's, it's not a, a, a flip switch thing and it's nothing you can simply throw some money at. It's much more art than science. Anybody in HR knows that. But to answer your question, there's nothing that I saw in LB1108 that specifically says that they will do that. But I have great faith in, in, particularly, Tim Wilson and Dr. Smith.

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**DeKAY:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** More questions? Thank you for your testimony.

**MICHEAL DWYER:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** We had 12 proponent emails come in, no opponent, and no neutral emails. Come on up. I was just interjecting that, we're not winding up yet. Still supporting LB1108, I would assume?

**AMY SANTOS:** Yes, sir.

**MOSER:** Welcome.

**AMY SANTOS:** Thank you. Good afternoon, Senators. My name is Amy Santos, that's spelled A-m-y S-a-n-t-o-s. I am in my 28th year as a paramedic here in Nebraska. I have worked from 911 services, all the way through hospital. And I am a paramedic program director at one of our community colleges as well. I am testifying in support of LB1108 today on behalf of the Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Association. We are an association of career and volunteer emergency care providers. Our statewide membership is made up of licensed emergency medical responders, emergency medical technicians, EMTs, and paramedics. NEMSA is very grateful to Senator Dorn for his continued efforts to support the work of emergency medical services. NEMSA was part of the discussion when the Legislature first considered the dollar for life fee to be added to motor vehicle registrations. When that was passed in 2001, the proposal was scaled back to 50 cents to fund the EMS operations fund, uses for activities under the EMS Practice Act and the Statewide Trauma System Act. The demand for these funds already outpaces the revenue collected so it is imperative that the Legislature expands the funding stream. Increasing the motor vehicle registration fee is a logical move as the Legislature originally contemplated dedicating a whole dollar to the EMS to support EMS activities. Emergency medical care is a public service. Resources for the training and equipment required for this statewide service should be supported by our state. As our EMS agencies are experiencing more calls with fewer volunteers, our existing resources have not kept pace with Nebraskans' needs. Emergency medical services are an indispensable component of healthcare delivery in our state. We are the first responders who provide lifesaving care during crises, and our presence is often the difference between life and death in rural communities. Workforce shortages, financial crises, and inadequate reimbursements are taking a toll on these agencies, placing

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them in an immediate operational jeopardy. These financial challenges hinder their ability to maintain and replace equipment, stock medications, pay for insurance, and cover other fixed expenses. Training and certification are vital components of EMS provision. With patient safety being the main concern, NEMSA is committed to maintaining a standard for education, licensure and ongoing training that ensures qualified EMS professionals are prepared to provide the lifesaving care that the job requires. Developing strategies to grow and promote a qualified workforce is the key to sustaining EMS services and increased EMS funding is critical to that goal. While we appreciate that it is never easy to raise a fee, this is-- this one has been stuck at its current level for more than 2 decades with our EMS network suffering as a result. \$1 is not too much to ask for our state's drivers to contribute to the help-- to contribute to help ensure a well-staffed, well trained, and well-equipped emergency medical service response when accidents and tragedies occur. On behalf of the Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Association and the dedicated professionals who serve our local communities, I express our gratitude for your attention. Thank you for your time and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

**MOSER:** Senator Bostelman.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Could you give us an idea either as-- and I don't know if, if, if you're an EMT with work from a paramedic, after you completed the national registry and after your licensed, how much-- what-- the training that we're talking about over a year's time, do you have a, a ballpark as a cost that, that you personally accrue on, on course classwork, whatever it might be?

**AMY SANTOS:** So at, at each level from EMR to paramedic there is, essentially, 4 levels. So there's a different range that goes from 80 to 60 hours that are required. So 8 would-- or I'm sorry, 8 to 60, so 8 would be the EMR, 60 would be for paramedics. Obviously the higher the licensure increases, the more expensive those trainings are. So on an average-- so for a 2-year license cycle, it could cost paramedics close to, you know, \$400 to \$600 additional for the additional certifications that come along with those license requirements. That's, you know, the, the extra ones besides the just general continuing education. So, you know, they're all expensive courses that we have to maintain.

**BOSTELMAN:** OK. Thank you.

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**AMY SANTOS:** Um-hum.

**MOSER:** Thank you for your testimony. Appreciate that.

**AMY SANTOS:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** More supporters? How many people intend to testify yet? 1, 2, 3, 4. OK. Thank you. Welcome.

**MARLENE BOMAR:** Good afternoon. My name is Marlene Bomar, M-a-r-l-e-n-e B-o-m-a-r, and I am here testifying in support of LB1108 introduction-- introduced by Senator Dorn. I am testifying on behalf of the Nebraska State Volunteer Firefighters Association, Battle Creek Volunteer Fire and Rescue, which I am a firefighter and EMT, and I also serve as a board member of the Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Association. Since 2001, when the original 50 cents for life was enacted, a 50 cent fee has been collected annually for the registration of motor vehicles and trailers. The 50 cent fee has never been increased since 2001. And as you all know, this has not kept up with the increased cost over the years. Present day registration brings in approximately \$1.2 million to assist in funding operations of the Office of Emergency Health Systems within the Department of Health and Human Services. This office carries out all state-related functions of EMS. Unfortunately, with the funding not keeping up with the cost of inflation, the Department of Health and Human Services is short one person and one more stepping down in March and they will need to replace. And if this bill would be passed, maybe they would be able to hire at least two more people to help with the data and help with expanding programs to help EMS services in Nebraska. As more and more pressures are placed upon volunteer emergency medical service providers from an increase in call volume and a reduction in volunteer staff in several parts of the state, the functions of volunteer EMS providers in Nebraska are being challenged, and our presence is often the difference between life and death in rural communities and in many places of the state threatened by the need to transition to paid services, or in some areas, moving to a paid service which has already occurred. At this time, there's only 4 existing EMS regions in Nebraska, whereas recently as 2016, there were 7 regions. Shifting workload responsibilities within the Office of Emergency Health Systems contributed to the reduction-- the reduction in regions. However, by reducing the number of EMS regions, there is less support available to the volunteers. Recruitment and retention of volunteer EMS-Nebraska volunteers, the departments they serve, and the citizens and the communities served by volunteers must consider, react, and

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look only to themselves for the increasingly difficult task of recruiting and retaining volunteer emergency medical providers. There is no role played by the state to assist with the-- these areas of concern in the dwindling number of not only volunteer EMTs, but fire also. Some areas of the state have had to transition to paid services which obviously adds to the tax burden of the local community. Educational hours to become an EMT are often the subject of complaint. In an effort to keep the number of educational hours from increasing, the training does not offer any instruction, guidance, or assistance in the technical systems of actually being an EMT.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Is there-- can you wrap that up quick?

**MARLENE BOMAR:** Yeah. I just ask for your support. That's what we want.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Are there any questions for the testifier? Seeing none, thank you.

**MARLENE BOMAR:** Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Any more proponents?

**TOM HAMERNIK:** Good afternoon,--

**DeKAY:** Good afternoon.

**TOM HAMERNIK:** --Vice Chair-- Senator DeKay. My name is Tom Hamernik, T-o-m H-a-m-e-r-n-i-k. I'm a volunteer EMT from Clarkson, have been since 1979. I'm also a business owner. My father and my brothers are also EMTs with me. And I'm proud to say that my grandson is in the EMT class as a senior in high school. So I'm pretty excited about that. I'm not going to go over many of the things that have been covered earlier. Just to say that, that 50 cents for life that was established in 2001 has half the value that it once did. And we desperately need those monies in the state EMS department to provide data for us to use to battle the, the challenges we have with recruitment and retention, especially in our rural communities and remind you that 85% of Nebraska geographically is covered by volunteers. Senator Bostelman asked earlier about the hospitals providing training for our EMS people. I personally have attended case studies through West Point, Columbus, and Norfolk hospitals, and that provides CEUs for [INAUDIBLE] and it also is an opportunity for our EMTs to follow a call from our first response through the hospital ER, maybe on to a transport helicopter service, and on to the end result of the patient. And many, and many times due to the, due to the rules that protect

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personal information, we don't get to hear what happened, and we don't get a chance to evaluate what was done from start to finish. And those case studies provide an opportunity to do that. And so I appreciate the hospitals doing that for us. There's been a couple of comments about some of the parts of Nebraska moving to paid services. That's fine. It works in more populous areas. In more rural areas, there's a longer response time for us to get there, and then you have a longer transport time. And so our current system with, with community based EMTs is a better system for a lot of Nebraska. So I encourage you to move LB1108 out of committee and on to the floor for debate. I thank, Senator Dorn, for bringing the bill forward. And I'd answer any questions if I could at this time.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Senator Brandt?

**BRANDT:** Thank you, Vice Chair DeKay. Thank you, Mr. Hamernik, for your testimony. I would say Clarkson is very representative of most of the rural towns in Nebraska. Have you ever had a situation as an EMT where you could not roll the ambulance because there were no EMTs in town when you got the call?

**TOM HAMERNIK:** We have had that situation, and our neighboring towns have had that situation, and we will help each other out. We're in a county-wide dispatch system. We have automatic dispatchers in some cases with vehicle accidents. We also are able to respond right away and say, we're short, can one of our neighbors send an EMT over? The ambulance goes to the call, their EMT goes directly there. We've done it for them. They've done it for us. It works.

**BRANDT:** The other thing that I have noticed in my district, District 32, is that you might be young for an EMT in our district. Do you get--

**BOSN:** What are you saying?

**BRANDT:** I would say he's aging well. So do you-- what feedback do you get from younger people for not becoming an EMT or an EMR?

**TOM HAMERNIK:** I think they, they haven't had the experience of the, the good feeling you get from providing that service. I don't think-- I think they're worried about the time it's going to take, the commitment. They don't understand the relationship you have with the people that you work with and the, the what you get out of it in the community. And I'm damn proud of what we do. And I think more people,

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if we could get them in the door and get them to go on a couple of calls, they would much better understand that it's worth the commitment.

**BRANDT:** All right. Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Any other questions? I have one. Being in a rural area, you have a response time, and you take it to the nearest hospital, Norfolk, Columbus or wherever. Do you-- If that patient has to be transported on, and a fixed wing or a helicopter isn't available, are you able to go ahead from as a Clarkson ambulance? Are you--

**TOM HAMERNIK:** Absolutely. Yes. We would--

**BRANDT:** Go ahead and transport them on to Omaha.

**TOM HAMERNIK:** Yeah, we're pretty much equidistant from Norfolk, Columbus, a little bit further to Fremont, and Schuyler is our county hospital, so we'll go to any one of them. If we have a situation where you have a prolonged extrication in a vehicle accident, we can request the helicopter on scene.

**BRANDT:** What, what happens if you get a patient to a local hospital, like up in my district, that all you're trying to do is stabilize that person to move them on? Are you able to go ahead and move them on to a bigger hospital like in Omaha?

**TOM HAMERNIK:** Generally not. And they're-- they have a certain amount of time that they'll spend in the ER. In the past, we've taken those people from our local [INAUDIBLE] county hospital to Omaha. Not so much anymore. Most of that had-- In the past 15 or 20 years, most of that's been done by private ambulance companies, which are not so pop-- not quite as frequent as they are-- were, once were. So we've been asked in some cases to transport those patients from West Point to Omaha. It's more difficult for us to do now.

**BRANDT:** OK. Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Any other questions? Seeing none, thank you.

**TOM HAMERNIK:** Thank you.

**DeKAY:** Any other proponent?

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**JOEL CERNY:** Good afternoon, Senator DeKay and committee. My name is Joel, J-o-e-l, Cerny, C-e-r-n-y. I'm the fire chief up at Linwood, Nebraska in Senator Bostelman's district. And I also am one of the representatives from Nebraska to the National Volunteer Fire Council, where I am the chairman of their recruitment and retention committee. The thing I wanted to talk to you today about is leadership. My-- I've learned that a lot of the departments that struggle with recruitment and retention sometimes have a leadership problem, and the HHS offers leadership training. And with this increase in funding, I think they could move that out to more regional trainings, or even offer them trainings more often than they do now, so. Luckily, Linwood was able to send one of our EMTs to that training years ago, and now she is our rescue captain, so it does work. The other issue is training, the cost of the training. HHS does not fully fund the training that it takes for my small department to send someone to the training, so. And of course, increasing the funding should-- maybe they can raise how much of that they reimburse us back, so. With that, I want to let you know I am strongly supporting of LB1108. Any questions?

**DeKAY:** Thank you. I see a question, to my right, Senator Bostelman.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Vice Chairman DeKay.

**JOEL CERNY:** Now, you promised me no hard ones.

**BOSTELMAN:** I didn't promise you that the other night, I said I'd-- we'd get you-- So thank you, Mr. Cerny, for being here. We were, we were at the Schuyler Fire Department and EMS dinner the other night [INAUDIBLE] as well. So we always appreciate all that you do for your communities and for the state. My question is from the national exposure, experience that you have at the national level. I know, Mr. Dwyer handed this out, which has some information, we're getting it recopied, some of the pages didn't copy through. But are there some things that you've seen from other states as far as a specific training or funding that we could do here?

**JOEL CERNY:** I've heard just about every other state has the same exact problems Nebraska does as far as recruitment and retention. You know, the-- Nebraska's has put in a lot of SAFER grants over the last few years to help with recruitment and retention in Nebraska. And the national level has too. Currently, I'm doing monthly coffee talks on Facebook to help with recruitment and retention. So if you like the National Fire Council on Facebook, you'd maybe get to see me doing

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that some evening. But, anything that we can do to help, and get more people involved.

**BOSTELMAN:** Yeah, I understand that completely because it's a huge issue across the state and trying to-- I'm trying to continue to work on that and try to figure that out. Part of it is just people, you know, we're losing so many people in rural Nebraska, it's a challenge to keep up. I know, I think we talked about it, Mr. Hamernik may have spoke about it as far as departments or EMS services, working together, you have a community, maybe it's Leigh, Clarkson, Howells. And you know, I don't have an EMT available on Wednesday afternoon or Thursdays or whatever that may think, maybe Linwood does all that-- something similar to where you work together on schedules, so, you know-- so you have coverage basically. Have you, have you seen that work across the state?

**JOEL CERNY:** So Linwood is actually have a non transport license. So we do not transport with the squad coming out of Linwood. We're dependent on North Bend, Schuyler, Craig, or David City coming into our district. In the past, some of our EMTs have had to jump on board with them to be able to do the transport. So that's, that's kind of what we're doing up in our area.

**BOSTELMAN:** OK, Thank you. And if you ever want to see some history on the fire side of things, this is the man to go visit. So thank you, Mr. Cerny.

**DeKAY:** Thank you. Any other questions? I'll turn it back.

**MOSER:** Thank you.

**JOEL CERNY:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Thank you very much. More supporters.

**JERRY STILMOCK:** Mr. Chair, members of the committee. My name is Jerry Stilmock, J-e-r-r-y, Stilmock, S-t-i-l-m-o-c-k, testifying on behalf of my clients, the Nebraska State Volunteer Firefighters Association, the Nebraska Fire Chiefs Association. I don't know if you're there yet, but I hope I can get you there if others haven't. They, they live it, breathe it, sleep it, wake up, and they do it. 2000, 2001, I went back and read the transcripts, there was a committee hearing to go to \$1. It was rejected in 2000. Came back again in 2001. You know what the number one thing they said? Recruitment and retention. I don't believe in 2000, 2001 nurses, teachers were asking the Legislature to

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do something for recruitment and retention. But I tell you what, we're hearing it now, and we need those nurses. We need those teachers, teachers. And we're doing a lot to get those people in the workplace, in the workforce. But I tell you what, 2000, 2001, that was when the message was to this panel of your predecessors of the Transportation, Telecommunications Committee. So we're looking at \$1.2 million to help out with recruitment and retention and a host of other issues that you've heard about this afternoon. But recruitment and retention. Senator DeKay, it was like a three point basket at the buzzer. You hit it. Others have mentioned it as well. And thank you, Senator, for co-sponsoring along with Senator Dorn, Senator Bostelman, being a champion of rural EMS. And Senator Brandt, the-- it goes like this, town number one, it has a rescue service. Nobody responds to a 2 a.m. call with an infant turning blue. Page goes out for a mutual aid. It's a common phrase in terminology. You-- Several of you asked about this afternoon. Mutual aid. What does it mean? You want to help the other person. It's 2:00 in the morning. Neighboring town has already been out on the call, but they get a mutual aid call. Second call comes in. Third call comes in. What happens? The person says, I better go because I don't want that infant on my watch to die. Is it an issue of guilt? Is an issue of selflessness? What's happening to push that person out the door? What's happening is it's repeating itself over and over again. Those calls aren't being answered by a neighboring community. The, the city of Wahoo. They had to go-- they had to leave a volunteer force. They had to do it themselves. They are covering now for the city of Wahoo. They're covering for Malmo. They're covering for Weston. They're covering for Colon. All trying to make up for those areas that have left EMTs, left a volunteer service. So what's the answer? Go to property taxes. Let them pay for it. Let the citizenry pay for it. We're simply looking for \$1.2 million to try to help with recruitment and retention, and the host of other issues you've heard of this afternoon. What do you got to lose? \$1.2 million to help to see if it will work. The same cry they were asking for 21 years ago. I need to conclude, but I wanted to make sure that I address a couple of the questions. \$500,000 goes out, and it's a, it's a pass through, \$500,000. Out of this \$1.2 million General Fund money, \$500,000 goes out back to the EMTs and the candidates to become EMTs. That money's used to reimburse if they pass this National Registry, the exam. My time's expired. I had a couple more points, but I'll pause because it's been a long afternoon. Senator Moser, I appreciate your gesture to me. I'll finish up.

**MOSER:** Be concise.

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**JERRY STILMOCK:** Communities have gone to pay. Nebraska City, the city of, now they also-- they provide service to rural areas as well. Cass County. It's a paid service, and they, they offer supplemental services to the volunteers that are struggling to make calls. There was a fee-- I will refrain from using the word I was going to. There was a very, very difficult situation that happened in 2023, and Regional West out of Scottsbluff folded its service. That impacted so many communities in the panhandle, down as low as Ogallala. Ogallala, the city of, and the County of Keith now have to pay for this service. Where is it going to be paid for? Well, you get a little bit from Medicare, Medicaid, but that's a little low. You get a little bit for me-- health care reim-- in health care insurance reimbursement. But you know what? The taxpayers are going to pay for that. \$1.2 million to try to bring about some change. My last point was senators in Omaha and Lincoln, respectively, on the committee. You suffered this too. You were involved in it as well, because when that squall hit last Thursday, a couple Thursdays ago, when that, that blare went out, some of you may have been caught going home in it. Between Omaha and Lincoln, volunteers. Lincoln westward, volunteers. We need to try something to help the dwindling numbers. Out of courtesy to your extension I'll pause. And we certainly appreciate Senator Dorn and Senator DeKay and others off the committee that have helped. We'd ask you to advance LB1108. We would ask you to strongly consider joining on. Thank you.

**MOSER:** Questions? Senator DeKay.

**DeKAY:** I don't really have a question. I just have a statement. You mentioned earlier about what gets them out the door at 2:00 in the morning, and from visiting all the volunteer fire departments, the EMS, the ambulance services in my district, it's not a sense of guilt getting them out of there. It's a sense of civic duty that they perform those duties on behalf of their community, communities and the surrounding area. So that's--

**JERRY STILMOCK:** May I comment, sir? The-- I wrote in my notes. Guilt is quite a bit of a strong term. I think it's more selflessness. It's caring, it's devotion, it's willingness to help another area, which is not even in your community. Thank you sir.

**MOSER:** Senator Bostelman.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Have you looked at changing what our rural fire boards can fund? So have statutorily, have you taken a

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look and changing? Cause our rural fire boards can only give funding to our fire-- the fire side, not the EMS side. So your EMS aide in your, in your rural volunteers, if they get money from-- at all from the fire, from the fire department side, it's out of kindness, if you will. Have you looked at-- considered statutorily looking at the rural fire board, if they could potentially give funding to EMS rather than just the fire side.

**JERRY STILMOCK:** Yeah. A great question Senator. My understanding is there are fire districts out there that are 100% involved in EMS. Case in point, Gretna Suburban Fire Protection District. They provide both fire and rescue, and they are a fire protection district. The other side of the coin, of course, is, a majority of fire districts, not all of them, receive their money as a request to the county. If I can, big brother/big sister, can I have an allocation of levy authority for my fire district or for our fire district? And the county, you can say yes or no. And that, that curts-- that curtails the ability of a fire district to cover additional responsibilities if it would go into. There's a host of, of issues that, that our association has looked at in the past, and that's responsibility of EMS. There is no jurisdictional requirement that EMS be handled by a city, by a fire district, by a county. And so we're strapped with the good naturedness of the volunteers that are willing to commit time, energy, resources, etc. But but there's no jurisdiction. There's nobody in charge. So when Malmo goes down, and Weston goes down, when, when Colon goes down, it's like, well, what are you going to do? Well, here comes big brother/big sister Wahoo.

**DeKAY:** The follow-up question to you will be a little bit of my-- a bit of little concern I would express on this is allowing DHHS to decide where-- how to allocate funds. How is it potentially do you see that that could be worked out to where the EMS board or someone has more say in how those funds are used? Because we know [INAUDIBLE] needs to be replaced. It just has to. But then the next thing you could have a host of funding opportunities out there. How are we going to focus that into areas that we need to do it in the best method without EMS involvement, leaving it up to DHHS, I'm not so sure we'll get it to where we need to get it.

**JERRY STILMOCK:** We went into overtime and DeKay's another three pointer at the buzzer. Two answers. We have a Governor that's backing the issue. And two, trust in micromanagement. That is no criticism to you, Senator Bostelman, you've been through the thick of it in seven and a half years here. But trust in micromanagement for 1.-- \$1. 2

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million additional dollars, are you willing, sir, to trust somebody in administrative care in the Tim Wilson we spoke of that is doing phenomenal leadership, and the Doctor Jim Smith is doing phenomenal leadership out of the EMS Board. And Doctor Tren-- Cantrell is doing wonderful leader for-- leadership for the Trauma Board. Are you willing, sir, to allow them the trust to carry out the task of spend this money wisely?

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Other questions? Senator Brandt?

**BRANDT:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you, Mr. Stilmock--

**JERRY STILMOCK:** Sure.

**BRANDT:** --for your testimony. Through all this testimony, we are short of EMRs, EMTs, paramedics. What's the number? How many do you need to fix this? Does anybody know?

**JERRY STILMOCK:** We-- you-- No.

**BRANDT:** OK.

**JERRY STILMOCK:** Would you be surprised if I told you they cannot-- the department-- this, this is not criticism. The computer system that they have, the database that they have, they cannot differentiate between a paid service out of Omaha or Lincoln, and volunteer EMTs or paramedics. I can't get into the specifics, but we've asked the questions. Mr. Bomar in the audience, he's asked the question several times. What, what are we losing? We can't tell you, sir. And that's the data part that goes back to trust. Allow this agency to use fund dollars, fee dollars. Lo and behold, Senator Dorn told you he tried LB415 last year in front of Appropriations. Use the doggone General Funds. \$1 million of General Funds, plus another \$150,000 to help fund the, the reporting system. It, it, it's finally going to be renewed after ten years of using the same one. We gotta trust that they'll use the money wisely to get the answers that you so desperately want to hear. I can tell you, we lost 60 EMTs in the last two years, and they were all volunteers. I can't tell you. You could have the president or the chief of the Health and Human Services up here. They couldn't tell you. They don't know. The data doesn't support the question I asked. You need to know that, you're entitled to know that answer.

**BRANDT:** All right.

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**JERRY STILMOCK:** Yes, sir.

**BRANDT:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Thank you for your testimony. Appreciate your--

**JERRY STILMOCK:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** --appearance today. Anybody else to speak in support? All right. Is there anyone to speak in opposition? Is there anyone to speak in the neutral? Seeing none, that will close our hearing on LB1108.

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Closing? Closing? Closing?

**MOSER:** What?

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Closing.

**DORN:** I waive closing.

**MOSER:** You waive closing? OK. Thank you Senator. Sorry about that.

**DeBOER:** That's how efficient we are, we don't allow anything--

**Speaker 1:** Me. I appreciate. It's all considered. This sounds good.

**MOSER:** Welcome, Senator Cavanaugh.

**Unidentified:** I just like this. Did this to folks.

**J. CAVANAUGH:** Want to start?

**MOSER:** Yes. Please go ahead and start out.

**J. CAVANAUGH:** Good afternoon, Chairman Moser and members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. I'm Senator John Cavanaugh, J-o-h-n C-a-v-a-n-a-u-g-h, and I represent the 9th Legislative District in midtown Omaha. I'm here to introduce LB1249, which would eliminate the notary requirement for a bill of sale when applying for a certificate of title for a kit vehicle. A kit vehicle is defined in Nebraska statute, thanks to a law passed by Senator Bostelman introduced in 2018, LB909, as a vehicle which was assembled by a person other than a generally recognized manufacturer of vehicles by the use of a reproduction resembling a specific manufacturer's that is at least 30 years old, purchased from an authorized manufacturer,

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and accompanied by a manufacturer's statement of origin. This definition was a long needed update to allow these sorts of replica vehicles to get valid titles. LB1249 allows for owners of such vehicles to obtain a title, with a bill of sale for parts not included in the kit, without the need for a notary. It also allows for used parts to be-- parts in the assembling of the vehicle. Truth be told, I'm not a huge car enthusiast, I know that surprises most of you, and I think some of our colleagues were surprised to see my name on this bill. But when a retired teacher I know reached out to my office about this bill idea, I thought it made sense, and it was a simple change that would make it easier for-- to title these vehicles. I understand the committee received a letter from the Department of Motor Vehicles suggesting some technical changes to the bill. I have no objection to their proposed language, which do not affect the intent of LB1249. I thank the committee for your time and, and ask for your support of LB1249. I'd be happy to take any questions.

**MOSER:** Any questions? Senator Cavanaugh?

**M. CAVANAUGH:** Thank you. Senator Cavanaugh. I think you're being unfair to yourself. We've all seen the roller skate you drive through every day. You're definitely a car enthusiast. Thank you for bringing this.

**MOSER:** Other questions. So what is the change that your bill actually makes?

**J. CAVANAUGH:** That's a great question. Thank you, Chairman Moser. Fundamentally, it just strikes the word "notarized" from the statute where, when you buy a replacement part, currently, you have to show a notarized receipt for the purchase of that part to go with the rest of the kit. Just striking the word notarized. So you still have to show the bill of sale or the receipt, for those replacement parts. But it doesn't have to be notarized.

**MOSER:** It simplifies the process?

**J. CAVANAUGH:** Yeah. I mean, it just takes away the requirement that you notarize that bill.

**MOSER:** If you're building a hot rod, and you're building your own frame, you got your own engine, transmission, they're all used. And then you put some '32 Ford or some, you know, stylish body on there. Can you get that titled as a '32 Ford?

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**J. CAVANAUGH:** That might be more of a technical question for somebody who is more of a car enthusiast than I am. My read of this is that you build most of the car from the kit, and then if you need a different piece or a replacement piece, then you don't have to get the, the receipt for the purchase of that replacement piece notarized.

**MOSER:** All right. Senator Barry [SIC].

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you. So would this be construed like what happened back in the day, taking VWs and turning them into dune buggies off the chassis or anything like that and have a completely different body style or not?

**J. CAVANAUGH:** I don't think this would apply to something like that. This specifically applies to cars that are built out of a kit, which is meant to be a replica of another car. I think what you're talking about is modification of an existing vehicle.

**BOSTELMAN:** Just to lighten the mood a little bit, would Johnny Cash like this bill or not?

**J. CAVANAUGH:** I would hope so.

**DeKAY:** You're on the record.

**MOSER:** Senator Brandt?

**BRANDT:** Thank you, Chairman Moser. Thank you, Senator Cavanaugh, for bringing this. Didn't take long to read the bill. The word trailer has been inserted at least five times in here. Does this mean that if I'm welding a trailer together in my shop, it qualifies as a kit trailer?

**J. CAVANAUGH:** Excellent question, Senator Brandt. Thank you for raising that issue. If you take a look at the DMV's letter, they suggest striking the words trailer. Those-- the addition of the words trailer, the number of times it was added was more of an opportunity when opening up the section of the statute to clean up a section of the statute. DMV disagrees that that clarification is necessary. And so the DMV suggests that the law is clear enough without the word trailer added and asked that we keep it out of there.

**BRANDT:** I would agree with that statement.

**MOSER:** OK. Other questions? Senator Bosn.

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**BOSN:** Sorry. Higher than your head. OK, so I, I also noticed what you were talking about with the trailers. So that brought me back to the notarize. Do you know what the history is behind why they wanted it notarized by-- bill of sale? I mean, it's not notarized-- if I go buy a car. It's not notarized if I buy a '69 Camaro and rebuild it. So why are these kits-- did they originally require a notary, if you know?

**J. CAVANAUGH:** Yeah, that might be a better question, either for somebody behind me or even Senator Bostelman, who I think had a hand in some of the original statute, but I'm not allowed to ask him questions.

**BOSN:** OK.

**MOSER:** Other questions? Senator Bostelman?

**BOSTELMAN:** Gotta ask now, so. Thank you, Senator Cavanaugh for being here. So typically we ran into on, on kit cars, or other vehicles, or old cars, vehicles we pull out of, out of a pasture, those type of things is serial numbers. VIN numbers specifically. So how does-- and that's usually been the Department of Motor Vehicles portion on this, and I don't know where they're at on this specific bill. I'm sorry, I was out just a minute ago with the previous testifiers. So their concern has always been on VIN numbers, you got to match VIN numbers up. Chop shops, those type of things, parts coming in, make sure that, that we don't get into that, that area of illicit businesses that may be out there. How does this, or does this not, address the VIN number question? Because all of our cars, if it's a motor, if it's a frame, it's, you know, the VIN number has got to follow, and it has to match. You can't mix and match those.

**J. CAVANAUGH:** Yeah.

**BOSTELMAN:** How does this fit into that?

**J. CAVANAUGH:** So I thank Senator Bostelman for the question. So the DMV did weigh in on this. They don't have a problem with the bill. They're only issue with the bill was what Senator Brandt identified as the excessive use of the word trailer. But they, yeah, their position was that this bill is OK as is, without the word trailer. As to the VIN number, my understanding is that this would apply to a smaller subset of the parts, and you still have to show that, well, in your original bill or your original language, you solve that problem by requiring that you produce the receipts for the purchase. The receipt

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still has to be produced, so it's still addressed to that, it just doesn't have to be notarized. So it just takes that a little bit less cumbersome process of having to find a notary for your, you know, whatever you call it, O'Reilly's Auto Parts part or something like that is, I always imagine.

**BOSTELMAN:** OK. All right. Thank you.

**MOSER:** Any other questions?

**DeKAY:** I'll save it.

**MOSER:** OK. Thank you, Senator.

**J. CAVANAUGH:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Other support? Welcome.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Lucky--.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Good afternoon, Chairman.

**MOSER:** --your bill is the last of the day.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Yeah. I feel very lonely in here.

**MOSER:** We're glad to see it lonely.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** I'm just grass roots, and so I'm bringing grass roots action to you. Good afternoon, Chairman Moser and members of the committee. My name is Mike, M-i-k-e, Kmiecik, K-m-i-e-c-i-k. I represent the Nebraska Rod and Custom Association, the largest car club in Nebraska. We have approximately about 2,000 members. I'll be happy at the end, and I can answer each of the questions that you asked, that you ask. And I can give you pretty definitive answers to help you along the way there. I'm going to just summarize what I've written up for you. So let me go ahead and do that very quickly. Manufacturers make kits to recycle the parts from donor cars and salvage cars. Kit cars and replicas began in the 1970s using the VW beetle as a donor chassis. And then we put a fiberglass body on it. From the 1980s on, kit car and replica manufacturers began to build their own chassis, but still used donor cars for the parts for engines, transmissions, suspension parts, other stuff like that,

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including the largest manufacturer today, Factory Five, which uses the 5.0 Mustang as its donor vehicle. Thank you, Senator Bostelman, for passing, for authoring LB909 in 2018 that resulted in 60-142.05, that made it vastly easier to title the replicas, OK? but we-- there are just some need for amendment. We met with the DMV, and they said, we just enforce the laws, they make the laws. But if we want the changes that you're asking, you're going to have to ask the senators to change the laws. So that's what we're here doing. I'm going to turn now to my explanation, the need for amendments. The Nebraska Rod and Custom Association views the DMV as an honorable, very honorable department doing a great job of enforcing the laws of Nebraska. We disagree a little on their titling kit vehicles and replica guidelines, but understand, our cars are just a small fraction, less than a very minute part of 1% of all the titles that they do. So we aren't very important, except just to our collector car people. We met with Senator-- Mrs. Johnson, a DMV administrator. We contacted the ombudsman department, and she lined up the meeting with Senator-- with Administrator Johnson, and she attended the meeting, OK? I talked to her yesterday just to confirm my recollection of what happened in that meeting, and she agreed with me that we were told that if we wanted to change the law, if we wanted to change their guidelines, the law would have to be changed first of all. OK. And the language of 60-142.05 and also alternately, also possibly, also the definition 60-119 of kit cars. They asked us to include in Senator Bostelman's 60-142.05, a phrase saying both new and used parts could be put on kit vehicles and replicas. Currently what they do is their guideline says if you are putting new parts on a kit, you can be a replica. But if you do not put-- but if you put used parts on the kit, you can still build it, but you're not going to be classified as a replica, you're just an assembled vehicle. So that's the thing that we are-- that's the thing that we're trying to clarify right there. As you know, and from looking at it history, and then very many of the members here with the questions you're asking are very knowledgeable about what kit cars are. As you know from the history of kit cars, replicas, this makes sense because the parts-- because the kits are manufactured primarily to recycle the parts off of donor and salvage vehicles. In addition to 60-142.05, we crossed out the words, or asked that the word "notarized" in front of Bill of sale be crossed out because it is unrealistic to expect auto part retailers and salvage yards like Speedway Motors, O'Reilly's to have a notary on site. And since 1993, the Title II donor cars do not have to be notarized. You're very correct. Precedent for this was set when former Senator, and I hope I get his name right, he was a former Chairman of this committee,

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Senator Friesen authored a bill, LB750 in 2022, which became law 60-142.11 that removed the word "notarized" for assembled vehicles. Sorry to say, up to this point, the DMV guidelines have not recognized this, but we're hoping that they will, with this attention-- added attention being drawn to it, that they will remove "notarized" from assembled vehicles, and also do the same thing for kit vehicles and replicas. When we called Shell Valley Cobra in Platte City-- Center, Nebraska, Nebraska's premier kit vehicle and replica manufacturer, to get their input on this bill, they said their biggest concern was the last sentence in the definition, 60-119. They said it made no sense to say kit vehicles are not glider kits because glider kits is, is what makes a kit vehicle replica kit. They, they indicated they thought they would talk to Senator Moser. But then we talked about it more and we decided after further research, we believe, even though it's not defined in statutes, that glider kits deal primarily with semi-trucks produced by Kenworth, Peterbilt and a couple of other manufacturers that don't have engines, possibly transmissions, but they produce the truck as a glider kit and that these are then people go out and get their own engines and transmissions and put them in them. OK, so we decided we weren't going to bring up the issue of glider kits. Instead, we want to concentrate on the issue of allowing used car parts on, on kit cars and on replicas and getting rid of notarized. At this point, I'm happy to answer any of your questions. I don't remember what they were exactly.

**MOSER:** Are you happy with Senator Cavanaugh's bill?

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Ecstatic.

**MOSER:** OK. It took me five minutes to figure that out.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** OK.

**MOSER:** And then answers to our questions about, is there a problem with building a tubular frame and putting a '35 Studebaker body on it? Can you get that titled? And what would the title say? What it's say kit car? '35 Studebaker? Would it say--

**MIKE KMIECIK:** It would, it would depend on whether you put new parts or used parts. First of all, if you build it yourself, you're going to be assembled, OK? and I know there's a movement, low cost movement, other stuff like that, to build frames yourself, but replicas only deal with-- there's a, there's a manufacturer like Shell Valley, there's a manufacturer like Factory Five, like Speedway Motors, who

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would offer a kit and an MSO with it. And then if you put new parts on it, you're a replica. If you put used parts on and you, and you are titled as a '27 Ford or whatever like that. But if you put used parts on it, you're categorized as an assembled vehicle, and the title says here, you did it in 2024.

**MOSER:** OK. Questions?

**MIKE KMIECIK:** That you had a question too. Yes, sir.

**BOSTELMAN:** So-- thank you, Chair Moser. The question on the notarized bill in the statute is for it's only for the major component parts would be motor, transmission, those type of things. So, it's not-- if you're going to NAPA, I don't think, to pick up--

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Yeah, it, it-- Well, you can buy engines from NAPA. You can buy engines from Speedway Motors, transmissions and that kind of stuff like that. And you're totally 100% correct. It is only for the major parts, not like alternators or anything like that.

**BOSTELMAN:** And I think I remember the reason for that. I'll go back to what Senator John Cavanaugh and I were talking about a little bit ago, was, was the concern with chop shops and those type of things.--

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Right.

**BOSTELMAN:** --that we have a-- the notarized bill was to provide some certainty that it was a legitimate transaction type thing, and we have that on there, so. I guess that's, I guess that's my question that on the notarize bill, take a notary out, if they don't have that at all of those facilities, I guess.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** It's a--

**BOSTELMAN:** It's something to discuss.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Senator, it's a very legitimate concern. And we in the-- in-- who have collector cars are very concerned about the theft of auto parts, other stuff like that. There is, there is part of the titling process that the sheriffs are required to look at the Nebraska and National Crime Registry, you know, in terms of those major component parts. What we're asking is-- and there could be a refinement done to this, in terms of auto retailers like Speedway Motors, O'Reilly's, places like that that you buy an engine from, we think a receipt from them is representative enough, and that's what

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Senator Friesen did for assembled vehicles. A refinement that we would certainly support would be if you're going to, like a flea market, or, you know, a sale, or if you're getting parts from a private party that, that requires a notarized bill of sale. We have no trouble with that. That would take a little bit of changing to it, but certainly that's something that could be very capably done in that by you people and, and Senator Cavanaugh. But there are many safeguards there, and we support those safeguards. And we're just saying it's very hard when you're going to Speedway Motors to say, I need it notarized. And they say, well, we don't have a notary on site.

**BOSTELMAN:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** Other questions?

**FREDRICKSON:** I have a question.

**MOSER:** Yes.

**FREDRICKSON:** Thank you, Chair Moser. Thank you for being here today and for taking the time to, to-- I've actually learned quite a bit from your, from your testimony. It's clear that you're very passionate about this.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Thank you.

**FREDRICKSON:** And I appreciate you being here and sharing this with us. I, I just had a quick question. You, you represent the Nebraska Rod and Customer Association.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Yes.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** How long have you guys been in existence?

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Wow, I'm, I'm kind of a recent member. I have been with kit cars for-- since I was a young man. I, I, I was a teacher at Westside High School for 30 years.

**FREDRICKSON:** That's in my district.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** With three children and a, and a wife to support, a Corvette was a dream, OK? So I got into kit cars, and I could build a kit car for \$3,000 or \$4,000, OK? And have something like that. I actually formed a kit car club in the 1980s that went to about 2,000. When I retired from teaching, I moved to Houston, Texas, and was there

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for a while, and the club kind of disbanded. And then my dad got Alzheimer's, and I knew I had to come back and support my, support my dad and my mother, you know. And so just recently, I kind of got back into wanting to do something. I'm 79 years old, and when you're 79 years old, you got two choices. You can be a cranky old man sitting on a couch waiting for death, OK? Or you can be somebody who is happy by doing service for other people. And so I decided, well, I'm going to, I'm going to revisit the things of my youth. I was a good tennis player and I tried to take up pickleball. After two lessons, I said, sorry, I quit, my body won't take it. But I also was very interested in kit cars and I'd like to help the future generations. In fact, I am starting a kit car club again because I believe we're going into the golden age of something like kit cars. You know, we are switching from gas to electric partially, and, you know, there-- we can debate that issue to a great extent. But what that means is you bought-- we're buying these cars that we've got tens of thousands of dollars in the technology of. And after a short period of time, what are we doing? We're taking and crushing them. We want to instead encourage people to go ahead and build some type of a car, because we can-- they can do it for \$3,000 or \$4000 plus a donor car, OK? and and we're trying to get especially young people involved in that. And saying to young people, do kit cars, don't do drugs, do kit cars, don't do gangs. Excuse me for getting emotional.

**MOSER:** It's all right.

**FREDRICKSON:** Well, thank you for being here. Thank you for your passion and advocacy.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Thank you.

**FREDRICKSON:** Yeah.

**MOSER:** Any other questions? I don't know if 79s the oldest in the room or not? There may be some of us even older than you. Thank you.

**MIKE KMIECIK:** Thank you very much for listening to me.

**MOSER:** More supporters. Any other supporters? Any opposition? Any neutral? We did receive one neutral email on LB1249, and we would like to Exec on a couple of things when we're done. So Senators, don't get away. Try to make it quick so then you can go and do your whatever. Thank you, Senator, welcome back.

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**J. CAVANAUGH:** Thank you Chairman. And thank you all for the conversation and the questions. And you know, this is early in the session, but it's my favorite hearing so far because you all know how I like constructive criticisms. And, I think just in--

**MOSER:** And you know how we like to give it.

**MOSER:** Yeah. Well, and I appreciate Senator Bostelman as a resident expert on this subject. I think he pointed out some, some really good ideas. And so I've got some good stuff to work with to come back. So when you guys Exec later today, maybe I won't ask you, but I will work on a draft that includes Senator Bostelman's suggestion, I think about constraining the notarization in the way that we got to there that, you know, I like a more specific bill anyway, that addresses the problem in the most narrow way we can. So I appreciate the conversation. I learned a lot. My takeaway is, is that we are on the verge of a golden age of kit cars. And I think if we pass this bill, we will usher it in even sooner. So thank you. Happy to take any questions.

**MOSER:** I just, I just got done building a 1948 CJ-2A Jeep, and I left it sit for about six months, then I got in it and started driving it down the road, stepped on the brakes all the way to the floor, just about crashed into a barbed wire fence. So I sold it. Thank you very much Senator,--

**J. CAVANAUGH:** Thank you.

**MOSER:** --appreciate it. That will close our hearing on LB1249.