

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

ARCH: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber for the thirty-fourth day of the One Hundred Ninth Legislature, First Session. Our chaplain for today is Reverend Brenda Peters, Unity of Omaha from Omaha, Nebraska. Senator Wendy DeBoer's district. Please rise.

BRENDA PETERS: Let us pray. As we fill this space with divine love, positive energy, and knowing that today is a new day, we let that love fill us up and remind us that we are one. And we have great gratitude for everyone in this building who works for the state of Nebraska and those who live in it; knowing that we are all weaved together in that divine love. And as the day goes along, as the sun keeps shining, let us be reminded of that divine love in us, around us, through us, as us. And we are grateful for all the history and for all the knowing and the love that we bring together as we work together as one. And so it is. Amen.

ARCH: I recognize Senator Raybould for the Pledge of Allegiance.

RAYBOULD: Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, fellow Nebraskans. Please join me in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ARCH: Thank you. I call to order the thirty-fourth day of the One Hundred Ninth Legislature, First Session. Senators, please record your presence. Roll call. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: There's a quorum present, Mr. President.

ARCH: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Are there any corrections for the Journal?

CLERK: I have no corrections this morning, sir.

ARCH: Thank you. Are there any messages, reports, or announcements?

CLERK: There are, Mr. President. Amendments to be printed from Senator Sanders to LB123, Senator Quick to LB567. Notice of committee hearing from the Revenue Committee and a motion to be printed from Senator McKinney to LR55. That's all I have. Excuse me. One announcement, Mr. President. The Business and Labor Committee will hold an executive session at 9:30 in Room 2022. Business and Labor, 9:30, 2022. That's all I have at this time.

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Floor Debate February 27, 2025

ARCH: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. We will now proceed to the first item on the agenda.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. First item on the agenda, Senator Raybould would move to withdraw LB675 with MO46.

ARCH: Senator Raybould, you're recognized to open.

RAYBOULD: Thank you, Mr. President. I move that we withdraw LB675 at the request of the Santee Sioux Tribe. Thank you.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue, you're welcome to close. Senator Raybould waives close. Colleagues, the question before the body is the motion to withdraw LB675. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 37 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the motion to withdraw.

ARCH: The motion to withdraw is successful. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item on the agenda, Select File, LB296A. Senator, I have nothing on the bill.

ARCH: Senator Ballard, for a motion.

BALLARD: Mr. President, I move that LB296A be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor say aye. Opposed, nay. Motion carries. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, Select File, LB609A. Senator, I have nothing on the bill.

ARCH: Senator Ballard, for a motion.

BALLARD: Mr. President, I move that LB609A be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor say aye. Opposed, nay. LB609A advances. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item, General File, LB185, introduced by Senator Dover. It's a bill for an act relating to landlords and tenants; amends Sections 76-1413, 76-1450, 76-1457, 76-1474, and Section 76-1410; provides for electronic notices by landlords to tenants under the Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act and the

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

Mobile (Home) Landlord Tenant-- Landlord and Tenant Act; defines terms; and harmonize provisions; repeals the original section. The bill was read for the first time on January 13 of this year and referred to the Judiciary Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Dover, you are recognized to open on LB185.

DOVER: Thank you, Mr. President, and good morning, colleagues. For sake of brevity, I will be brief. This bill simply allows a tenant to opt in or opt out in notice communications with the landlord. So, again, it-- I think we all would know the reliability of the mail isn't as good as it used to be. That's what state statute allows for notices, notices. And so this simply allows again a tenant to opt in or opt out as many times as they care to. To use emails as a form of notices, I think is more convenient and more reliable. Thank you.

ARCH: Senator Bosn, for the introduction to the committee amendment.

BOSN: Thank you, Mr. President. I-- I'm introducing AM75, which is the Judiciary Committee amendment to LB185. Good morning, members. AM75 is the-- provides-- entitles a tenant to withdraw the consent without the imposition of any addition-- conditions or consequences. So for those who opt in and then decide they wish not to receive them electronically, it allows them a method to go back to receiving paper copies. I ask for your support on AM75 to LB185. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue, Senator Bosn, you're recognized to close. Senator Bosn waives close. Colleagues, the question before the body is the adoption of AM75 to LB185. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on adoption of the committee amendment.

ARCH: AM75 is adopted. Seeing no one in the queue, Senator Dover, you are recognized to close on LB185. Senator Dover waives close. Colleagues, the question before the body is the advancement of LB185 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

ARCH: LB185 does advance to E&R Initial. Colleagues, Senator Spivey would like to recognize a very special guest this morning, her son

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

Naasir, who's located under the north balcony. Welcome. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, General File, LB7, introduced by Senator DeKay. It's a bill for an act relating to real property; amends several sections in Chapter 76; changes provisions relating to affidavits for covered real estate, foreign-owned real estate, oil and gas leases, real estate of railroads, public utilities, common carriers, and within cities or villages, manufacturing or industrial establishments, investigations and violations, and civil and criminal immunity; defines and redefines terms; provides for exceptions and applicability; harmonize provisions; repeals severability-- provide severability; and repeals the original section. The bill was read for the first time on January 9 of this year and referred to the Agriculture Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator DeKay, you're recognized to open on LB7.

DeKAY: Thank you, Mr. President, and good morning, colleagues. Last year, I introduced LB1301, which created the Foreign-owned Real Estate National Security Act and modernized Nebraska's foreign-owned land ownership to deal with the challenges posed by foreign adversarial nations seeking to acquire land in Nebraska, especially near sensitive military installations like Offutt Air Force Base and the Panhandle missile silos. The idea was that Senator Hardin's LB1120 would act as a trip wire so that enforcement action could be taken-- undertaken by the state with LB1301. LB7 is a technical cleanup bill for both LB1301 and LB1120. LB7 does four things. First, the bill would define Native American tribes and clarify that such tribes are not foreign governments. The definition was-- used is derived from Senator Raybould's LB1288 from last year. This change would ensure that our state's Native American tribes are not inadvertently subject to the provisions of the Foreign-owned Real Estate National Security Act when undertaking real estate transactions. Second, LB7 would update the federal regulation used in LB1301 and LB1120 to identify some of the federally designated foreign adversaries in those bills. The C.F.R. used in LB1301 was moved to its current location at 15 C.F.R. 791.4 after we adjourned last year. Third, LB7 would add a specific reference to federal regulations 31 C.F.R. 800.210, which relates to the exemption we granted certain restricted entities who have undergone review from the federal government for potential national security concerns by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, or CFIUS. This section would expand the safe harbor provision to include properties for which CFIUS has determined the property

holdings does not present an ongoing national security concern, to which restricted entity must certify that there is compliance by January 15 of each calendar year to the Department of Agriculture. Finally, this bill would add a requirement that the Legislature be notified in the event of divestment action as ordered by a court against a person in violation of the Foreign-owned Real Estate National Security Act. Right now, only the governor would be notified if a divestment order is issued by a court. The Bill Drafting Office also made a number of housekeeping changes and revisions to this bill as well. LB7 was heard by the Agriculture Committee on January 28, was advanced out on a unanimous 8-0 vote. There were no opponents to the bill at the hearing. There is also a committee amendment, so I will wrap up now and yield my remaining time. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: As the Clerk indicated, there is a committee amendment, AM77. Senator DeKay, you're welcome to open.

DeKAY: Thank you again, Mr. President. The committee amendment retains all the substantive rate changes in LB7 introduced and inserts to a few additional clarifications. First, the amendment inserts additional defined term for the term foreign corporation. A foreign corporation as defined as one incorporated under the laws of, of a jurisdiction outside of the United States and further expressly excludes from the definition entities formed under the laws of any U.S. state, territory, or tribal government. The definition is added to avoid any interpretation that a corporation other than one formed in Nebraska is a foreign corporation. The amendment also revises the definition of nonresident alien to confine the term to human beings. As enacted last year, nonresident aliens were defined as noncitizen persons utilizing the term persons to refer to all individuals. LB7, as introduced, inserts person as a defined term that includes individuals as well as businesses and government entities. The clarification in the committee amendment avoids inadvertently expanding the term to nonresident aliens beyond individuals. Next, in the LB1120 portion of LB7, the committee amendment also has additional clarifications to a citation to federal regulation used to identify real property in the vicinity of military sites, to mean that regulation as it existed on January 1, 2025. The committee amendment also inserts a new subsection (3) into Section 76-3703, which sets out the general prohibition against foreign persons or entities acquiring real estate interests in the state, except otherwise allowed by the Foreign-owned Real Estate National Security Act. The amendment adds a new subsection (3) to exclude from the prohibitions of the act, individuals, corporations or governments of countries designated by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States as accepted real estate foreign states

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

under 31 C.F.R. 802.1001(a) and 802.214. As currently designated, these include four countries: Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. As with other exceptions, the prohibitions of foreign ownership that were carried over from previous law contained in LB1301 in-- as enacted last year. This exclusion is not available to restricted entities. Finally, the amendment, amendment clarifies that notifications to the Legislature of corridor divestments are made to the Clerk of the Legislature. I want to thank everyone who assisted me and my staff in preparing LB7 for introduction and to additional parties who came forward at the hearing for this bill. The additional cleanups contained in the amendment respond to additional suggestions to further address uncertainties and ambiguities, and thereby avoid any unintended disruptions in investments in this state by foreign entities that we would welcome. Thank you.

ARCH: Mr. Clerk, for an amendment.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator DeKay would move to amend the committee amendment with AM310.

ARCH: Senator DeKay, you're welcome to open on AM310.

DeKAY: Thank you again, Mr. President. AM310 is an amendment to the committee amendment. AM310 would do two things. First, the amendment would simplify the definition of an Indian tribe. Under this amendment, an Indian tribe would mean an Indian tribe or band, which is recognized by federal law or formally acknowledged by the state. This change was requested by the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska following the public hearing. Second, AM310 would make the same change we adopted in LB43 a few weeks ago, as it pertains to foreign adversary list. This amendment would update the day we referenced the foreign adversary list 15 C.F.R. 791.4 from January 1, 2025 to February 7 of 2025. On this date, a change at the federal level came into effect, which simplify-- simply clarifies that the Chinese Special Administrative Region of Macau is indeed a part of the People's Republic of China. This change was brought to my office's attention by the Revisors' Office as a potential policy issue to be aware of. I will add that AM310 is a white copy amendment. The Revisors also felt it would be helpful for the body to see how AM310 changes AM77 and the underlying bill. I would appreciate a yes vote on AM310. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue, Senator DeKay, you're recognized to close. Senator DeKay waives close. Colleagues, the question before the

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

body is the adoption of AM310 to AM77. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 43 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on adoption of the amendment.

ARCH: AM310 is adopted. Senator John Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Apologize, colleagues, just got here. There was a big accident outside Omaha that delayed my arrival, but I was listening to Senator DeKay's introduction, and I wonder if Senator DeKay would yield for a question.

ARCH: Senator DeKay, would you yield?

DeKAY: Yes.

J. CAVANAUGH: Senator DeKay, I apologize for missing some of your introduction, but was part of one of these amendments the concern that this bill would have-- without an amendment would have inadvertently prevented Native Americans from owning land in Nebraska?

DeKAY: This goes back to an Idaho law in 2023, which at that time depicted of-- sovereign nations as possibly being a foreign adversary. So this clears it up so that Native American tribes can acquire land in the state of Nebraska and not be considered a foreign adversary, because they are a sovereign nation, but under the federal guidelines of the United States.

J. CAVANAUGH: OK. So the amendment addresses the concern that the Native American tribes might be considered foreign adversaries.

DeKAY: That was interpreted in Idaho law in 2023.

J. CAVANAUGH: OK.

DeKAY: And we want to clear it up that they are not.

J. CAVANAUGH: We have cleared up with-- was that amendment that we just voted for or this amendment?

DeKAY: It was-- let me check my--

J. CAVANAUGH: Oh, that's OK. It's not-- doesn't matter. That's-- but thank you, Senator DeKay, I just want to make sure I heard that right.

DeKAY: Yep.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you. Well, I support not treating Native American tribes as foreign adversaries. So I have supported-- I voted for the last amendment, and I intend to vote for this one. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Senator DeKay.

ARCH: Senator Spivey, you're recognized to speak.

SPIVEY: Thank you, Mr. President. And good morning, colleagues and folks that are watching online. And thank you for such the warm welcome to my oldest son, Naasir, who is here with me as he is out of school because of parent-teacher conferences. So he's-- it's take a kid to work day. And so he's excited to be here with all of you and to see what's happening. I wanted to just take a moment and pause to recognize Senator Victor Rountree. He is celebrating this weekend, his 13th church anniversary. The name of his church is Endure To The End Ministries COGIC, and he has an action-packed weekend full of folks coming in and flying in, including his family. He has visiting pastors and folks from ministry celebrating, and I just want to acknowledge the investment Senator Rountree has made in community outside of what he's doing now, but within making sure that folks feel welcome. He is a, a God-fearing man. He practices those values. And so it is such a big deal that your church is celebrating their 13th anniversary. And so I just wanted to take a point of privilege to acknowledge that, and congratulations to you. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Seeing no one left in the queue, Senator DeKay, you're recognized to close on AM77. Senator DeKay waives close. Colleagues, the question before the body is the adoption of AM77 to LB7. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 44 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee amendment, Mr. President.

ARCH: AM77 is adopted. Senator DeKay, you're recognized to close on LB7 and Senator DeKay waives close. The question before the body is the advancement of LB7 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 43 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

ARCH: LB7 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item on the agenda, General File, LB372, introduced by Senator McKeon. It's a bill for an act relating to agriculture, amends Section 75-109; eliminates defined terms and

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

provisions relating to grain inspections, special certificates, fees, powers and duties of the Department of Agriculture, the Nebraska Origin and Premium Quality Grain Cash Fund, the Agricultural Suppliers Lease Protection Act, labeling requirements for honey, and a deceptive trade practice; harmonize provisions; repeals the original section; outright repeals Section 2-3813, 2-3814, 2-5501, 2-5502, 2-5503, 2-5504, 2-5505, 2-5506, 2-5507, 2-5508, and 81-2,181. The bill was read for the first time on January 16 of this year and referred to the Agriculture Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator McKeon, you're recognized to open on LB372.

McKEON: Thank you, Mr. President. First time on the mic. I introduced LB372 at the request of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. The purpose, the purpose of this bill is to repeal unnecessary provisions within the department that have never been used, implemented and forced or funded. The bill has written repeals and provisions relating to honey standards statutes. Nebraska Origin and Premium Quality Grain Certificates Inspection Program and the Agricultural Suppliers Least Protection Act. The honey label statute adopted in 2011 mandates that Nebraska Department of Agriculture adopt the regulations on establishing a standard of identity, identity for the honey labeling. Such regulations were codified within the Nebraska Administrative Code, 19 NAC 3, in 2012, but there's no apparent purpose for this regulation. The department does not regulate the standard of identity on the honey labeling, as it is considered a raw agriculture product by our food program. There are concerns about the honey or honey labeling. The FDA provides their own guidance on the proper labeling of honey and honey products. The USDA also provides grades and standards for extracting honey. LB372 also repealed the Nebraska Origin and Quality Grain statutes, which were adopted in 1986. Currently, the NDA refers to anyone requesting a grain grade certificate to the Federal Grain Inspection Service with the USDA Agriculture Market Service to do this exact type work. The USDA federal grain inspectors are certified and follow the federal grain standards to issue grain grade certifications. Department inspectors are not trained to do these inspections. Additionally, the cash fund for this program was never created. The Agriculture Supply or Lease Protection Act was the third act LB372 sought to repeal, to repeal, but as-- at the hearing, the co-op showed that there is some need for the statute as it is used in negotiating lease contracts with the railroad over to the right of-- right-of-ways, although the formal procedures of this act have not been used. The Department of Agriculture and the committee agree with the co-op. So this is being

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

removed from the bill with the committee amendment, AM81, that Senator DeKay will be-- introduce. With this amendment, there's no opposition to LB372. It was voted out of committee 8-0. And I want your green vote on this bill. Thank you.

ARCH: As the Clerk indicated, there is a committee amendment. Senator DeKay, you're recognized to open on AM81.

DeKAY: Thank you, Mr. President. The committee amendment is fairly straightforward and simply removes Sections 2-5501 through 2-5508 from the list of outright repealed sections under the original section of Section 3 of the bill. These sections are named act-- Agricultural Suppliers Lease Protection Act. Also because there is a section, are no longer repealed and would remain in law with the committee amendment, Sections 1 and 2 become unnecessary, and are also omitted from what remains of LB372. We had a good hearing on this bill, and the Nebraska Cooperative Council was well represented in opposition to repealing the Ag Suppliers Lease Protection Act. While the Department of Agriculture has never been petitioned to arbitrate a lease dispute under the provisions of the act, there was a fairly strong sentiment expressed by the act's availability continues to have value as an incentive to both tenants and landlords to be fair and reasonable. The committee amendment is recommended unanimously by the committee and I would urge your yes vote. Thank you.

ARCH: Turning to the queue, Senator Fredrickson, you're recognized to speak.

FREDRICKSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Nebraskans. I rise in, in support to this, both the amendment and the bill. But I actually am a little curious because I heard honey labeling on here and my, my husband is actually going to get a honey hive this year for the first time. And I recently learned that Senator Holdcroft is also-- has some apiary interest as well. So I had a quick question for Senator McKeon if he's willing to yield.

ARCH: Senator McKeon, will you yield to a question?

McKEON: Sure.

FREDRICKSON: So, Senator McKeon, can you walk me through the honey labeling? Is that, is that specifically for commercially produced honey, or is this applied to apiaries on individuals' properties as well?

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

McKEON: Well, I believe everything underneath that labeling is underneath the, the federal so they haven't used it on the state side.

FREDRICKSON: Got it. So, so this would apply to individual-- like if you have something in your backyard as well?

McKEON: Correct. And I know we have another bill that we just talked about this past week on honey also. So that might address some of that, too.

FREDRICKSON: That's great. Thank you for your time, Senator McKeon. Thank you for bringing the bill. I support the bill and the amendment as well. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue, Senator DeKay, you're recognized to close on AM81. Senator DeKay waives close. The question before the body is the adoption of AM81 to LB372. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on adoption of the committee amendment.

ARCH: AM81 is adopted. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

M. CAVANAUGH: Oh, my apologies, I thought I voted for the amendment. I hit the wrong button. I yield the remainder of my time back to the chair.

ARCH: Seeing no one left in the queue, the question before the body is the advancement of LB372. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 45 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on advancement of the bill.

ARCH: LB372 advances. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item, General File, LB312, introduced by Senator Strommen. It's a bill for an act relating to the Rural Health Systems and Professional Incentive Act; amends Sections 71-5662, 71-5663, 71-5665, and 71-5668; provides for student loans to students in nurse anesthesia practice programs and loan repayments for nurse anesthetists; harmonize provisions; repeals the original section. The bill was read for the first time on January 16 of this year and referred to the Health and Human Services Committee. That committee

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

placed the bill on General File. I have nothing currently on the bill, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Strommen, you're recognized to open on LB312.

STROMMEN: Thank you, Mr. President. Let's talk about rural health care. Good morning, colleagues. Thank you. LB312 would add the profession of nurse anesthetist to the Rural Health Systems and Professional Incentive Act. The Rural Health Systems and Professional Incentive Act was created in 1991 by this Legislature and is administered by the Rural Health Advisory Commission. The act was put in place to help incentivize health professionals upon graduation from their respective degree programs to go work in a designated health profession shortage area, which is essentially every county in Nebraska outside of the metro area. LB312 would provide the opportunity for a nurse anesthetist to take advantage of this incentive program and potentially make the choice to work in Sidney, Scottsbluff, Alliance, Pender, Aurora, any of our critical access hospitals that might otherwise be struggling to find and employ necessary medical staff. The act currently recognizes several eligible recipients to include pharmacist, dentist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, mental health practitioner, psychologist, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, psychiatrist, and physician in an approved specialty. LB312 would simply add the profession of nursing anesthetist to this list. The bill is currently structured in statute, would make them eligible for up to \$15,000 per year for 3 years of loan repayment assistance. According to the Nebraska Association of Nurse Anesthetists-- say that-- several of whom were at the hearing to testify, the average student debt of a graduating CRNA is around \$150,000. This incentive would not solve the total incurred debt in terms of fund eligibility, but it just might be enough of an incentive to ensure that we keep our rural ERs and ORs open, so that access to needed health care remains an option for those rural families. Speaking with hospital leaders in my district, finding providers has become a serious issue. We need all the tools we can fit in our toolbox to make sure we are able to deliver quality health care locally. I believe this is an excellent way to attract these highly trained individuals to our small communities. And if these individuals stay and work for 3 or more years, the stronger likelihood they become invested in the community and stay for the majority of their career and potentially the rest of their lives. Thank you. I would appreciate your support on LB312.

ARCH: Turning to the queue, Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. This time, I did mean to get in the queue. I rise in support of LB312. This is expanding the scope of this program that we established, I think maybe last year or the year before, that helps recruit health care workers to our more rural areas. And we have a health care crisis across the state, but especially in our rural areas. And so expanding who is eligible for these is, I think, a really great idea. And I'm grateful to Senator Strommen for bringing this bill. And I just wanted to reiterate my enthusiastic support. It's one of those things I miss about being on HHS. I would have voted for it out of committee. So thank you. I yield the remainder of my time.

ARCH: Seeing no one left in the queue, Senator Strommen, you're recognized to close on LB312. Senator Strommen waives close. The question before the body is the advancement of LB312 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 43 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on advancement of the bill.

ARCH: LB312 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, General File, LB179, introduced by Senator Clouse. It's a bill for an act relating to retirement; amends Section 16-1005; changes contribution rates for police officers employed by cities of first class; eliminates obsolete provisions; repeals the original section. The bill was read the first time on January 13 of this year and referred to the Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee, that committee placed the bill on General File. I currently have nothing pending on the bill, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Clouse, you're recognized open on LB179.

CLOUSE: Yeah, thank you, Mr. President. Colleagues, I come before you with LB179, which I introduced on behalf of the Police Chiefs Association of Nebraska and the League of Nebraska Municipalities. LB179 would amend Section 16-1005 relating to the defined contribution pension plans for paid full-time police officers in cities of the first class. You may remember that-- excuse me-- LB179 reflects a negotiated agreement between representatives of law enforcement and cities of the first class. LB179 would amend Section 16-1005 to increase the contributions from each police officer from 7% to 9% of his or her salary. And because of this, cities would also be increasing their contributions from 7% to 9%. And that's based on a, on a monthly, a monthly basis. And that is because due to Section 15--

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

16-106 [SIC], which requires the cities to match those contributions. Each police officer as well as the city will continue contributing 6.2% to the police officers' social security account. So this bill is just allowing police officers of cities of the first class, if they choose, to increase their contribution another 2%. Speaking in support was the, the Chief of Police from Kearney, who is also the head of the, the Police Chiefs Association. We also had the support of the Fraternal Order of Police, the Police Officers Association of Nebraska, and the League of Municipalities. And there was no opposition and no neutral, no one speaking neutral. So I would ask that we give a, a green light to this bill. Thank you.

ARCH: Turning to the queue, Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Would Senator Clouse yield to some questions?

CLOUSE: Yes.

ARCH: Senator Clouse, will you yield?

CLOUSE: Yes.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Senator Clouse. I'm just a chatty Cathy this morning, I guess. So LB179, was there an actuarial report?

CLOUSE: There was no-- not, not that I'm aware of, but the impact on the cities. And, again, it's first-class cities. And we have three of those that we-- there was a report of what that impact would be. Obviously, the city of Kearney, that impact would be around \$129,000, Norfolk might be \$81,000, and Papillion, I think \$114,000. So it does impact the cities but not, not the state.

M. CAVANAUGH: OK. And then-- so can you explain to me what, like, the structural change of this would be? How is this--

CLOUSE: What it does is they already contribute to their-- it's a defined contribution, not a defined benefit. So this is their contribution that's matched by the city. And so the Police Officers Association, they wanted to increase the amount that they could contribute. So that was negotiated between the League of Municipalities and the various police unions so that they could increase theirs 2% up to a 9%, which is fairly equivalent to what the fire.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

M. CAVANAUGH: OK. So the, so the police will be able to increase their contribution and the cities will have to match up to 9%.

CLOUSE: Yes.

M. CAVANAUGH: OK.

CLOUSE: They will match that. Yes.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you.

CLOUSE: OK.

M. CAVANAUGH: I yield the remainder of my time to the chair.

ARCH: Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Clouse, you're recognized to close on LB179. Senator Clouse waives close. The question before the body is the advancement of LB179 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 37 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

ARCH: LB179 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, for items.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. Your Committee on General Affairs, chaired by Senator Holdcroft, reports LB635 to General File with committee amendments. Additionally, motions to be printed from Senator McKinney to LB698, Senator Dungan to LB509. Amendments to be printed from Senator Jacobson to LB527. Notice of committee hearing for the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. New LR, LR56, introduced by Senator Jacobson and others. That will be laid over. And LR57 from Senator von Gillern. That will also be laid over. And finally, Mr. President, notice of a room change. Notice that the Natural Resources Committee will meet in Room 2102 on Wednesday, March 5. Natural Resources will have their hearing in Room 2102 on Wednesday, March 5. That's all I have at this time, Mr. President.

ARCH: You may proceed to the next item.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. Next item, General File, LB230, introduced by Senator Hallstrom. It's a bill for an act relating to kratom; to adopt the Kratom Consumer Protection Act; provide an operative date; and declare an emergency. The bill was read for the first time on January 14 of this year and referred to the Judiciary

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Hallstrom, you're recognized to open on LB230.

HALLSTROM: Thank you, Mr. President, colleagues. LB230 creates the Kratom or some pronounce it Kratom Consumer Protection Act to provide definitions and regulations to protect consumers from untested and potentially harmful products, while allowing safe products to remain on the market. For those of you that may be unfamiliar, kratom comes from a tropical evergreen tree native to Southeast Asia. The leaves have been used for centuries in Southeast Asia and for at least 50 years in the U.S. as a herbal supplement for energy focus, excuse me, and mood enhancement. There are 24 million kratom users in the U.S., with the majority using kratom in a responsible and healthy way. The kratom plant is in the same species as the coffee plant, and in its natural form, kratom behaves in a similar manner. Like coffee, kratom is a stimulant that can be used for energy and mood enhancement. At higher amounts, it can act as a sedative. Recently, newly high-- new highly concentrated synthetic products claiming to be kratom or kratom derived have entered the U.S. market. In particular, products with high concentrations of 7-Hydroxymitragynine or 7-OH, known by the street name 7 are being sold without restriction. These products have been identified as a risk to public health by the leading kratom scientist and the National Drug Early Warning System. Unlike kratom, these products contain 100 times more 7-OH and are full opiate antagonist. They hold a significant risk of adverse events, including causing respiratory depression and severe addiction. My goal in introducing LB230 is to keep these untested and potentially dangerous products off of the market while allowing true, well-manufactured and well-labeled kratom products to remain in the market. This bill treads the line between protecting access to kratom and protecting consumers from bad actors who put unsafe products into the market. There are amendments which either myself or Senator Bosn will address, but I would request your green vote on LB230.

ARCH: As the Clerk indicated, there is a committee amendment. Senator Bosn, you're welcome to open on the amendment.

BOSN: Thank you, Mr. President, and good morning again, colleagues. AM55 is the committee amendment to LB230 and it makes two changes. First, it strikes the declaration requirement regarding the level of-- I'm going to really screw this up so-- 7-Hydroxymitragynine, because the alkaloid fraction will need to be demonstrated by the producer for the product to be registered. Second, it changes the definition of an

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

adulterated product by providing that a product shall be deemed adulterated if it, quote, contains any kratom alkaloid or metabolite, including the 7-Hydroxymitragynine, and does not meet the definition of kratom product, end quote, under the act. AM381 is a white copy amendment that will follow and will be introduced by Senator Hallstrom. But I do ask your green vote on AM2-- excuse me on AM55. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Mr. Clerk, for an amendment.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Hallstrom, would move to amend the committee amendment with AM381.

ARCH: Senator Hallstrom, you're recognized to open on AM381.

HALLSTROM: Thank you, Mr. President. Continuing on with Senator Bosn's descriptions, and, just for the record, will note that this bill came out of the committee 8-0. The two primary supporters of the bill with amendments are the Global Kratom Coalition and the American Kratom Association. The amendments, while they are significant and they removed any concerns to allow us to move forward with the bill are probably more daunting than they need to be because both AM55 and AM381 are white copy amendments. In addition to the issues that Senator Bosn addressed in AM55, subsequent to the adoption of the committee amendment, we discovered that we had left out some of the technical amendments that we intended to be in AM55 from the beginning. So there wasn't any change in what the committee had been informed about, we just didn't contain some-- or include some of the language in the amendment. Some of the things that we have in the bill and the amendment, particularly the white copy amendment, AM381, one is that it updates the definition of synthesize to ensure that we are capturing both fully and semi synthesized components for purposes of excluding them from being one of the products that are recognized as permissible kratom products. We also clarify that the kratom is not to be used by ingesting via the lungs. So those are two of the amendments that we have. We also have a white copy amendment that strikes the requirement that the products include an attestation, that it meets the 7-OH limits, and that is because that information must be demonstrated at the time that the product is registered. And we do have a product registry, which is very simpler-- similar to that used for vape products in other legislation that's been adopted by this body previously. Finally, we have-- or two more amendments in the white copy, we streamlined the product registration process by allowing for consolidation of applications for the same product that may be sold in either varying quantities or packaged differently. And

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

finally, we close a potential loophole that might otherwise have allowed products like 7 from avoiding regulation because they could have not held themselves out as a kratom product. So that takes care of that potential loophole. And with that, again, AM381 is striking the provisions of the committee amendment. It will become the committee amendment if adopted. And I would ask the, the favorable consideration of AM381, AM55, and LB230. Thank you.

ARCH: Turning to the queue, Senator DeBoer, you're recognized to speak.

DeBOER: Thank you, Mr. President. I wonder if Senator Hallstrom would yield to a few questions.

ARCH: Senator Hallstrom, will you yield?

HALLSTROM: Certainly.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Hallstrom. I think you did an excellent job with your introduction, but I just wanted to highlight a few things so that everyone in the room understands. One of the proponents for this bill was the industry that you are intending to regulate. Is that correct?

HALLSTROM: Correct.

DeBOER: So what we have here is regulation. There was another bill that would have eliminated the entire sale of this product in Nebraska. Do you remember that one?

HALLSTROM: Yes. Senator Lippincott had introduced, I believe it was LB431 that would have made kratom a Schedule I controlled substance, effectively prohibiting its use in the state of Nebraska.

DeBOER: So this is a regulatory scheme which will instead allow the use of what the committee found to be the safe version of kratom, which is sort of the traditional use and not this 7 sort of--

HALLSTROM: Synthetic.

DeBOER: --synthetic. That was the word I was looking for. Thank you. So, colleagues, I just wanted to highlight for everyone that what is happening here is an industry has seen that there are others that are trying to come in with a synthetic product that is not-- does not have the same safety as the original, and are attempting to get in on the popularity of the original, and people are actually getting hurt from

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

that. So I wanted to highlight the good work that Senator Hallstrom has done here to create a regulatory scream-- scheme in conjunction with the industry. And so I would urge your green vote all the way up the board. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator John Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning again, colleagues. I, I support the bill. I appreciate things that Senator Hallstrom and Senator DeBoer were talking about. Again, I, I do support the idea of regulating instead of banning, obviously. But actually the reason I pushed my light to talk was I was looking at the bill, and I noted that this AM55, I guess I'm looking at AM55, creates a grant of authority to the Attorney General to prosecute, and then a grant of authority to the Department of Revenue to promulgate and-- promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the Kratom Consumer Protection Act. So just thought I'd flag for folks that we created, you know, a separate agency, one to prosecute, one to promulgate the regulations, which is what I was talking about all day yesterday on the other bill. And, obviously, we're working on finding a separate agency on that bill. But I just thought I'd flag for everybody that this is, this is the common practice of having one agency make the rules and one to the Attorney General to the criminal enforcement. So I support Senator Hallstrom's bills-- bill and amendments. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue, Senator Hallstrom, you're recognized to close on AM381. Senator Hallstrom waives close. Colleagues, the question before the body is the adoption of AM381 to AM155 [SIC]. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the amendment, Mr. President.

ARCH: AM381 is adopted. Senator Bosn, you're welcome to close on AM55 and Senator Bosn waives close. Question before the body is the adoption of AM55 to LB230. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 39 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee amendment, Mr. President.

ARCH: AM55 is adopted. Seeing no one in the queue, Senator Hallstrom, you're recognized to close on LB230 and Senator Hallstrom waives close. Question before the body is the advancement of LB230 to E&R

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 39 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

ARCH: LB230 advances to E&R Initial. Senator Hardin has a guest, Hyrum Duggar, who is job shadowing him today from Lincoln, Nebraska. He is located under the north balcony. Please rise and be welcomed by your Legislature. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item on the agenda, General File, LB501, introduced by Senator Meyer. It's a bill for an act relating to property taxes; amends Sections 77-1301, 77-1307, 77-1308, 77-1309, and 77-1725.01; changes provisions relating to assessment of real property that suffers significant property damage; redefines and eliminates terms; harmonize provisions; repeals the original section; declares an emergency. The bill was read for the first time on January 21 of this year and referred to the Revenue Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File. There's currently nothing pending on the bill, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Meyer, you're recognized to open on LB501.

MEYER: Thank you, Mr.-- thank you, Mr. President. I appreciate that. I'm introducing LB501 today. In 2019, Senator Steve Erdman introduced LB482 in order to address the problem of properties which get assessed for property tax purposes on January 1, but which might get destroyed on January 2 of that same year. According to the bill, the owners of properties destroyed with 30% damage or more before July 1 may apply for reassessment of that property. The language from LB482 was amended into LB512 through AM1604. The bill proved to be timely because 2019 was a year of the floods, and many farmers and ranchers were able to have their properties reassessed for property tax purposes. After LB512 along with AM1604 became law, the Inland Insurance building on the Lincoln Mall in Lincoln, Nebraska, was burned during a protest on May 31 of 2020. The owner of the building filed to have the property reassessed for property tax purposes as per the new destroyed property tax law. The claim was denied by the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners on the basis that the property was not destroyed by a natural disaster. The claim was appealed and was again denied by the Tax Equalization and Review Commission for the same reason, even though the bill specifically included destruction by fire as a qualification for reassessment. At issue was whether or not the fire caused by arson could be construed as a natural disaster or a calamity. Had the original language of the bill used the term damaged

instead of destroyed, the case would have been easier to decide at the lower levels of the court system. Instead, the word destroyed was being argued by the Lancaster County Commissioners and the TERC Board to mean destroyed by a natural fire, such as a wildfire. The case was appealed to the Nebraska Supreme Court, who finally ruled in favor of the Inland Insurance Company in March of 2024. In that ruling, the Nebraska Supreme Court said the following, and I quote, the statement specifically mentions granting property tax relief to owners of real property adversely affected by fires, earthquakes, floods, and tornadoes. No mention is made of providing tax relief only when those phenomena occur by forces of nature. LB501 is a simple cleanup bill which changes the statutory language from destroyed property to damaged property in order to make the law clearer, especially concerning instances of arson. Property owners who have had their homes or other structures damaged by arson during the first 6 months of the calendar year should not be required to pay property taxes based on the full value of their home or other structure, as it was assessed on January 1 of that same year. LB501 would help to ensure that all insured-- instances of arson would qualify for reassessment. Thank you.

ARCH: Senator Hansen, you're recognized to speak.

HANSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate Senator Meyer bringing LB501 in light of a lot of the recent damage that was-- occurred from the tornado that we had in Washington County, along with Douglas County recently, and the ability for a lot of these property owners to apply for this to get a break on their property taxes. And any time we get people a break on their property taxes who have gone through a hard time such as a natural disaster such as that, I think is one of the least things that we can do as a Legislature. So appreciate Senator Meyer bringing this and cleaning up the language, and I yield the rest of my time to Senator Storm. Thank you.

ARCH: Senator Storm, 4 minutes and 20 seconds.

STORM: What are we doing? What are we doing? I yield my time back.

ARCH: Seeing no one left in the queue, Senator Meyer, you're welcome to close on LB501. Senator Meyer waives close. Colleagues, the question before the body is the advancement of LB501 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on advancement of the bill.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

ARCH: LB501 advances to E&R Initial. Senator Storm would like to recognize 42 fourth-grade students from St. Wenceslaus in Wahoo, Nebraska. Please rise and be welcomed by your Nebraska Legislature. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item, General File, LB592, introduced by Senator Ballard. It's a bill for an act relating to the achieving a better life experience program; amend Section 77-1407; exempts accounts from levy, execution, judgment, garnishment, and other judicial enforcement as prescribed; and repeals the original section. The bill was read for the first time on January 22 of this year and referred to the Revenue Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File. There's currently nothing pending on the bill, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Ballard, you're recognized to open.

BALLARD: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Nebraska. LB592, which the Revenue Committee unanimously voted out of committee, put simply, the bill will protect money in the achievement of a better life experience or able accounts from being seized, garnished, or taken to pay debts of the designated beneficiary or owner of the account. In December 2014, Congress passed the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act or the ENABLE Act. Without the ENABLE Act, individuals with disabilities would face an asset limit and limited to no more than \$2,000 in savings. But under the act, individuals can save up to \$100,000 before the account and accounts being affected by some other benefits. Responding to Congress in 2015, Nebraska took an important step to help, help our disabled citizens by passing the Enable Savings Plan. Since then, the Enable Program will become a critical resource for many Nebraskans with disabilities. It has allowed them to save for essential needs without the fear of losing public benefits. These plans Nebraskans with disabilities have safe accounts for saving their money in peace. As of December 31, 2024, the program has seen Nebraskans greatly utilizing this service, opening well over 4,000 accounts and having over \$47 million in total assets. These statistics represent more than accounts and money. They represent increased liberty, confidence, and dignity by the account holders. It is important to note that these funds can only be spent on certain qualified expenses such as education, housing, transportation, and assistive technology and support services. That said, this remains a substantial gap in protecting these hard earned savings that require attention. Currently, Nebraska law protects college savings account plans from being seized, garnished, or otherwise taking to pay debts. All LB592 seeks to extend the same level of protection to the ABLE

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

accounts. This bill would ensure that assistance carefully saved by individuals with disabilities protect them from legal judgment, creditors, and other debt collections. This bill promotes the original intent of the Enable Savings Plans. This bill came out of the Revenue Committee 8-0 with zero opposition testimony and I ask for your green light on LB592.

ARCH: Turning to the queue, Senator Dungan, you're recognized to speak.

DUNGAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues, I rise today in favor of LB592, and just wanted to take a moment to talk about part of the reason I supported this. I want to thank Senator Ballard for bringing this bill. It's a, it's a very important bill, and it's one of those where you have a hearing that goes pretty quick and there's not a lot of testifiers, but I do think it has quite a bit of weight to it. Zooming out, I think what this bill represents is a continued commitment that we as a Legislature in the state of Nebraska have to the developmentally disabled or DD population. We're going to hear a number of bills this year, and I think already have in committee, about things that we can do to make things just a little bit easier for our friends in the DD community. For those who don't know who are new here or, like, new following along at home, the community is very near and dear to my heart. I-- I've, I've worked in and around the community now for the last few years and it really is important to me that we continue to highlight these needs as a Legislature. I think that this LB592 is a simple thing we can do to continue to protect those accounts. When we heard the testimony during the hearing, we heard about why it was important to make sure that the money in these ABLE accounts can't be garnished. Part of the reason is oftentimes the money that's in those accounts come from third parties, parents, friends, or other guardians. And so it's, it's trying to make sure that money stays there and can continue to support the individuals that those accounts were made to support. So, colleagues, I would urge your green vote on LB592. I think we have to continue to do whatever we can to support our friends in the DD community, and I hope that we have many other bills this year where we can continue that conversation. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue, Senator Ballard, you're recognized to close on LB592. Senator Ballard waives close. Question before the body is the advancement of LB592 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 40 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

ARCH: LB592 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item on the bill-- on the agenda, General File, LB300, introduced by Senator Murman. It's a bill for an act relating to schools; amends Sections 79-566, 79-567, 79-595 [SIC--79-594], 79-1219, 79-2401, and 79-2402; changes provisions relating to Superintendent Pay Transparency Act; changes provisions relating to and providing a limit for superintendent and educational service unit administrator compensation; defines terms; harmonize provisions; and repeals the original section. The bill was read for the first time on January 15 of this year and referred to the Education Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Murman, you're recognized open on LB300.

MURMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce LB300. When I originally brought LB300, it sought to cap superintendent compensation to five times the salary and benefits of a first-year teacher in the district. The goal was to slow down administrative bloat while putting an emphasis on supporting teacher salaries. When the Education Committee held a hearing on the bill, the Council of School Administrators pointed out that it would-- if we truly wanted to support teacher salaries, we would reverse it, saying teacher compensation must be at least one-fifth of superintendent compensation. The committee found that to be a good, that to be a good idea so we took that suggestion. As amended, the bill does exactly that. Also included in the amendment is the exclusion of longevity to a district. This is included as the bill aims to support administrators who have shown a proven long period of service to a district. Most of the time, the salary ranges for our superintendents are quite fair, but in some districts the salary of superintendents seems out of touch to everyday Nebraskans. For a baseline to frame the bill, let's take a look at the recent superintendent of Lincoln Public Schools salary and compare that to a few other superintendents outside of Nebraska. The recent superintendent of LPS received a generous salary of \$333,720, representing about 42,000 students. How do other superintendents compare? The last superintendent of Chicago Public Schools made a very similar \$360,000, where he represented over 325,000 students. So compare 325,000 students to 42,000 students in Lincoln. In simpler terms, the superintendent of Chicago received a similar compensation as the superintendent of Lincoln, despite serving about eight times the student population and likely living in an area with a significantly higher cost of living. If you do the math, the recent superintendent of Chicago was making about 90 cents per student

in the district. The superintendent of LPS was making nearly \$7.95 per student. I'm of course not saying we should pay superintendents by the student, but this dramatic of a difference is troubling; 90 cents to \$7.95 per student. Now, if perhaps you want a more similar comparison, we could look at another school district with a comparable size. LPS has a population of about 42,000 students, as I said, while Sarasota County Schools in Florida has a population of about 45,000 students, so about the same size student population. So despite being comparably sized district, the Sarasota superintendent only received \$255,000 a year, meaning LPS superintendent is making nearly \$80,000 more than a superintendent representing about the same size district in Florida. One of the questions that I received last year when I brought this bill was if I thought this sort of rule should apply to CEOs in the private sector? I think there are a number of key differences. One, in the private sector, if a consumer disapproves of the practices a business uses, they can stop-- they can shop elsewhere. That isn't an option for Nebraska families and their public schools. Two, if a private business mismanaged its funds, it risks bankruptcy or going out of business. This also isn't the case for our public schools. And, and finally, number three, our schools are taxpayer funded, meaning we leave an extra obligation of oversight to ensure-- excuse me-- we have an extra obligation of oversight to ensure that taxes on Nebraska are spent responsibly, because every tax dollar spent is a dollar taken out of a hardworking Nebraskan's paycheck. To conclude, I want to point out a few final details. According to the National Center of Education Statistics, per pupil spending on publication-- public education has more than doubled since the 1970s. One might think if we are spending more and more on education, our teacher salaries would represent that. But a 2023 article from the National Education Association says exactly the opposite. It writes: every teacher pay-- average teacher pay has failed to keep up with inflation over the past decade. Adjusted for inflation, teachers are making \$3,644 less than they did a decade ago. So I want to be clear, we are spending more and more on education and somehow, at the same time, less and less on teachers. Where is the money going? Much of it is going to administration. So this bill doesn't say administration is wrong or bad, but instead says the compensation between administration and teachers are disconnected. By passing LB300 as amended, we bridge that disconnect. Thank you, Mr. President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Murman. As the Clerk mentioned, there are committee amendments. Senator Murman, you're recognized to open on the committee amendments.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

MURMAN: The committee amendment simply reverses the original bill and says that instead of administrators not being able to receive more than five times the pay of a beginning teacher that it begins-- it says just the opposite that a beginning teacher must make at least one-fifth of what the head superintendent makes. And it also has a few exemptions for longevity in the district. So if a superintendent in the district has been in the district for a long period of time and has compensation time coming, or also has served in the district for over 20 years, that superintendent would be exempted from this rule. So that's what the amendment says, and it just reverses it so that it emphasizes that we need to compensate teachers in a more fair way compared to what we spend on administration. So with that, thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Murman. Turning to the key, Senator Brandt-- queue-- Mr. Clerk, for an amendment.

CLERK: Madam President-- Senator Murman, I have FA18 with a note you wish to withdraw.

DeBOER: So ordered.

CLERK: And, Senator Murman, I have FA19 with a note that you wish to withdraw that as well.

DeBOER: So ordered.

CLERK: I have nothing further at this time, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Turning to the queue, Senator Brandt, you're recognized.

BRANDT: Thank you, Madam President. I'm not sure where I'm at on this. We want to decrease our property taxes, and I kind of feel like they've targeted one very, very small piece of a school system and have, have kind of decided that this is the problem, and I'm not so sure that it is. We have 244 unique school districts in the state, and if I was in a school district that required a, a superintendent to have a certain background to come in and, and fix my school district if, if we had a high percentage of English, English language learners, children that, that need to be taught English or from multiple countries or a high degree of poverty, that district is going to look very, very different from, let's say, a suburban district that is pretty homogenous, and the needs for those two districts are very, very different. I would hope that that local school board or local control would decide what they need, and I think this will put

handcuffs on them if the individual they seek is outside of this array that we are putting there. I kind of would like to see the free market decide this. My concern with the 20% in the amendment is currently there's only two ways that you change teacher salaries in the state. One is through the negotiations with the current school board. And if that fails, you go to the Court of Industrial Relations. Now, with this amendment, you've introduced a third option that may be legal or it may not be legal. I'm not quite sure how that works. And if you flip this over, are your superintendents going to come back and say now we've decided we can get no more than five times what the teacher is, therefore, I'm worth five times? Will this backfire on us and all of our superintendents would decide this now is the value of a superintendent? If we're going to use this model, and I agree with Senator Murman that maybe chief executive officers in our public corporations, I know shareholders have looked at this, why don't we apply it to the entire state of Nebraska? Why don't we apply it to the function of the state? Why don't we take our highest paid employee, who is not the governor, by the way, and make that five times the lowest employee or our counties, our cities, our villages, our University of Nebraska, and we know where the highest paid salaries are there? And the reason we don't do that is we want to get the best people for these jobs. And I think this limits that. My understanding and talking to some of the lobbyists in the lobby is the state of New Jersey tried this, and after 2 years they repealed this because they could not get the right superintendents in the right jobs. When we use our cost per student, it's going to vary widely in the state, particularly when you get out to those rural districts, because, yes, you have a superintendent that's maybe making \$100,000 in a school district of 150 kids, which is going to be vastly higher per student cost than the example that Senator Murman gave for Lincoln. And we can do this all day long. I mean, every school district's going to have a different number. So I want to learn more about this before I can tell you whether I would support this. Right now, I would say I'm either neutral or opposed, but I would have a question for Senator Murman if he would yield.

DeBOER: Senator Murman, will you yield?

MURMAN: Did he ask a question?

_____: On, on the mic.

MURMAN: Oh. Sorry, I didn't hear the question.

BRANDT: Senator Murman, did you pass out this chart?

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

MURMAN: Yes.

BRANDT: OK. The question is, is this just for the state of Nebraska or this is a national chart?

MURMAN: I believe it is national.

BRANDT: All right. So this would be all, all public schools in the nation?

MURMAN: Yes.

BRANDT: All right. That's what I needed to know. Thank you, Senator Murman. I would yield my time back to the chair.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Brandt. Senator Riepe, you're recognized.

RIEPE: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I hate to admit it, but I think I agree with Senator Brandt here, and that, that's kind of a rare occurrence for me. I stand in opposition to the proposal presented in LB300, as it is contrary to free market and local school board authority. I believe LB300 is legislative overreach and imposes our views on the local school board. I also do not want this legislative body to become the state school board, where all of a sudden we are dictating down, we have enough on our hands, more than we can handle on certain days. And so I do stand in opposition. I think we, we need to allow the school boards to act responsibly. And as Senator Brandt pointed out, it varies. And sometimes you will have to pay more per student in some districts than you would in others. So thank you, Madam President. I yield my time.

DeBOER: Thanks, Senator Riepe. Senator Hughes, you're recognized.

HUGHES: Thank you, Chairwoman, Chairwoman-- woman. Sorry. No, I'm-- so on this bill-- I do serve on Education Committee. I am a yes on the amendment, AM168. It does make the bill better. But I am a no on the overall. And I will kind of talk through when this came out, when we had this hearing a few weeks ago. I served on a school board prior to getting into this fabulous new job that I have, and a school board has three main duties, and the three main duties are that you set the policy for your school district, you set the budget for the school district, and part of that in setting the budget you are in charge of hiring and firing and pay for the superintendent. Now, I had to have a discussion because about the week after I got elected on school board, I was in Walmart and was-- somebody came up to me and, you know, was in my face how I needed to fire the football coach. And that is not my

purview on the school board. We can hire and fire a superintendent, and that is it. Everybody else is downstream. So those are the three things that a school board does. And I want to walk through-- I never had to fire a superintendent. I never had to hire a new one. I had the same person through my 4, my 4 years-- my 4-year term. But we did go through pay negotiations and I'm going to walk through what we did. So it's taken extremely seriously. We, we have a performance evaluation that's done, and we set parameters for that for the year. We have goals. Every school board member filled it out, how we felt that superintendent fell along that, that performance evaluation. And so we, we gather data that-- so that's the, you know, how did this superintendent perform that year? Then we also look at-- your, your teachers are union negotiated. So they've got a union negotiated contract. And I'm just going to make up a number, let's say the year that we're doing this we increase teacher pay 2.4%. So we, we keep that in mind. Right? We've given staff a, a 2.4% raise. OK, what are we going to do for, for superintendent? And have they met the goals? We match that. And then there's another piece to it. We also look at like-size districts and see what are their superintendents making? So I was at a Class B school so we looked at other Class B schools in the surrounding areas and came up with an array and saw, where does our superintendent fit in that array of other superintendents? Because we're also-- it's a competi-- a competitive market, and if you are happy with the leader of your district, you want to make sure that they, you know, aren't going to bale ship and go somewhere else. So, so that's another piece to it. So I guess my point is there's a lot of work done. We're very diligent about it. And it's just-- it's interesting to me-- and I'm in my third year, that these 49 people standing in this Legislature, we talk a lot about local control and we give a lot of love to local control, but when it comes down to it, these people here think that ultimately they know better on the details. And in my opinion, this is micromanaging a detail beyond belief. We are going that specific on, again, three things that a school board is responsible for, we're taking one piece of that, and we are going all in to the smallest detail and dictating what, what you can do. Who has the information best? That group, that district. I'm, I'm not going to lie, I kind of liked what Senator Brandt mentioned. If we're going to do this with school districts, why aren't we doing it with any entity that is getting public dollar, whether that be university systems, NRDs, things like that. So I'm also going to mention-- how much time do I have left, Chairwoman?

DeBOER: 28 seconds.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

HUGHES: OK. See if I can do this quick. This bill does not affect my district in any way. I have two Class B schools, the rest are smaller. It will not be a problem. But, again, it's the micromanaging what a local school district is doing. And, and I just have issue with that. I'm going to get back on the mic. I also did a superintendent pay study two falls ago, and I'm going to talk through that next time. Thank you. I yield my time.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator. Senator Hardin would like to recognize a group of nursing students: guests of the Nebraska Nurses Association from College of St. Mary, Nebraska Methodist College, UNMC at Kearney, Lincoln, Norfolk and all-- and Omaha all together. So if you would please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Spivey, you're recognized.

SPIVEY: Thank you, Madam President, and good morning again, colleagues and folks that are watching at home. I really appreciate the conversation and some of the remarks made by Senator Brandt and Hughes. And looking at this bill, it looks like the-- what we are trying to solve for is not the right vehicle. And so what I heard in the opening and what has been raised is around teacher pay. How are we paying teachers? What does that look like, the retention? And I don't know if and I don't believe that this is the right vehicle for that. There are lots of conversations happening around supporting teachers. I, I personally am bringing a bill around paid family leave for 6 months to ensure that, again, our benefits are competitive and then people that are on the front lines doing some of the most important work are able to have the competitive salary and resources that they need. I remember going back to, to the pandemic and when our kids were at home with us, and I was having to not only do my job remotely, but then also to try to be a, a teacher to my now 10-year-old, how difficult it was. And I really got a firsthand glimpse at the important work that our educators do. And so if our goal is to ensure that teachers are paid appropriately, that we are providing value for the critical, important role that they play in educating our future workforce and our leaders of tomorrow, then I don't think tying this to superintendent compensation is, is that right vehicle. I am an Omaha senator and so OPS, the largest district across the state, is within my purview. And a bill like this would hurt the, the, the district there. And what does it look like? Superintendents are a, a specialized skill set. And so when we think about what it takes to be in that role and what does it look like? For OPS, for example, we have more than 9,000 employees, more than 100 facilities, and an annual budget of nearly \$1 billion. And so that salary and compensation needs to align with what we are asking that person to manage and lead again

for thousands and thousands of kids. And so tying teacher salary now to the superintendent, I know that there's that amendment that doesn't put the cap but still has that percentage, does limit our ability to hire the best possible leader and also does not truly address, I think, the true core root issue that we're talking here, which is teacher pay, retention, and, and what does that look like? And so Senator Hughes brought up specifically local control and I do think that this removes that. We talk a lot in this body about, you know, smaller government and the people that are closest to the issue in, in that geographic location know best. And I still believe that. And this is why we have school boards. As she mentioned, this is why we have folks that are elected to lead and to ensure that compensation for that superintendent is aligned and also help provide strategy and partnership with that superintendent around what pay and comprehensive benefit looks like for the additional staff that are working there. And so that is not our duty here, but the duty of our other elected colleagues in another body and space. And so I do believe that this bill does limit that local control and really not allows for the actualization of that market place and what's needed. There is not a one-size-fits-all model, and I believe this is what this bill does. It takes a blanket approach to say this is how we solve for this issue. Again, not recognizing the uniqueness of each district and geography across our state. And it does not trust the people closest to those students, those teachers, that district to make the best decision. And so currently, as stands, along with the amendments, I am not of support of this bill. I would be happy to continue to learn more. I'm, I'm going to punch back in later, but excited for the rest of the dialogue and perspectives from the colleagues that are in queue, and appreciate the conversation that has been had so far. So thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Spivey. Senator Juarez, you're recognized.

SPIVEY: It should be on for you.

JUAREZ: Thank you, colleagues, and thank you everyone who are watching our legislative activities today. First of all, I just wanted to begin by expressing my appreciation to everyone who has supported me after the death of my mother. I really appreciate-- appreciated your kind-- kindness. Excuse me. I definitely want to speak about this bill today. And I do think that this is, even with the amendment, a bill, of course, that I'm not going to support. I think that for all the superintendents throughout the state, this is an important ramification of wanting to control the superintendent pay. I have been through superintendent search. For those of you who may not know, I

was on the OPS School Board. So I, I know firsthand how much work that is to hire a superintendent, how important a superintendent's role is in managing our school districts. And I think that we want to go, as other senators have mentioned, which I have appreciated their voice today, taking a look at what the market pays. I just think that that, that is just so important. And I know that there are so many business owners here who know how critical that is to work with the market. And let's face it, salaries do attract talent. And in all industries, salary is so important. I think that it's a step in the wrong direction to try to control the salary. And, most importantly, I advocate for retaining local control with the school boards. And, therefore, that's another primary reason why I object to this bill. If you take a look, and from the study that I don't want to take away from Senator Hughes, superintendents in other districts have a variety of roles that they play besides being superintendent. And, therefore, with all the duties that they have that they take on, you know, paying them adequately, you know, equitably is really important. I think it's very dangerous to go down this path that we want to control salaries at all. I think that it's a wrong direction to take, because it is very challenging to attract someone to come to a particular school district, especially, you know, I don't know what all the issues are for school districts throughout the state. All of us have different ones. And so having an attractive compensation package is important so that we get the best leaders for our students. And as has been mentioned in committee hearings with bills that we've been facing in our committee, you know, let's focus on the students. Let's value what is important that we're doing for the students. And, you know, obviously when you're trying to select a leader who we're thinking about is who's best for our students. So I, again, want to ask my colleagues to please say no on this bill, let local control be retained, and understand the importance of the roles that our superintendents play throughout the state. And I, I respect all the districts and their option to be able to make their own decisions. Thank you.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Juarez. Senator Kauth, you're recognized.

KAUTH: Thank you, Madam President. I want to come out and say that I've been talking with a lot of people about this bill, and I believe I am going to be opposing this. I understand the impulse to want to compress salaries, their salaries for administrators sound very, very high. We hear a constant drumbeat of teachers are never paid enough. I think when you compare teacher salaries to things like social workers, Corrections officers, a lot of different fields, there's some equity there. So I don't know that I believe the teachers aren't paid enough.

It's very attractive to think that this is automatically going to result in increased teacher salaries. But I think what it's going to result in is higher property taxes or we're going to lose superintendents. We always hear, and Senator Hughes said this, and I agree wholeheartedly, we hear about local control all the time. And I fully support government at the lowest level possible. The people who are right there. If in a school district, the public is not coming to those school board meetings and learning and understanding about what goes into the salaries, what goes into a teacher's pay, what goes into a superintendent's pay, and showing up to voice their opinion about it, then it's-- it should not be the state that says here's what you're going to have to do. I really believe we need to honor the local control of this. I'm always concerned about price controls and the government deciding what someone is or is not worth. That is not the job of government, that has to be the job of the market, and the-- again, back to the local control. It's the responsibility of the constituents of the school district to show up, get themselves educated, and make known how they feel to their elected school board members. Again, those school board members are elected by the constituents of that district. If they don't listen when, when people show up, they need to be voted out. And that's the actual mechanism that we have to adjust salaries and to make sure things are not being extravagant. So I would, I would like to give my remaining time to Senator Hansen. Oh, he is waving me off, he no longer needs my remaining time, so I will surrender it back to you. Thank you.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Kauth. Senator von Gillern, you're recognized.

von GILLERN: Thank you, Madam President. I rise in opposition to AM168 and LB300 and some of the-- I'll echo some of the comments that were already made, but I'm looking at the committee statement, and I find it interesting that at the hearing that there were-- the only proponent that spoke was the sponsor of the bill, Senator Murman. There were numerous, numerous opponents that spoke that included the Nebraska Association of School Boards, Plattsmouth School District, Omaha Public Schools, Nebraska Council of School Administrators, the Greater Nebraska Schools Association, Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council, Nebraska Rural Community Schools. And then online comments included Greater Omaha Chamber, Lincoln Public Schools, ESU 3, and the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce. They were all opposed to this bill. And there were, there were eight proponent comments submitted online, which were all individuals except for one, one organization, Nebraska Against Government Overreach. So I find it interesting that while Senator Murman is passionate about this, and,

and I appreciate his passion to control spending in-- of, of public dollars, I certainly don't feel that this is the right way to get there. The-- it's, it's interesting how you-- our alignments change with, with different, different groups and individuals. But I'm actually looking at the testimony by Tim Royers, who spoke on behalf of the NSEA, which represents the-- of course, all the teachers and administrators in the state. And I'll just read a short excerpt from his. He said: I felt it was important to appeal-- appear personally to clarify our continued opposition to this proposal. First, district leadership is often one of the driving factors influencing an educator's decision to whether they're going to stay or move on to try to seek greener pastures elsewhere. Gallup polls continue to show that across all sectors, leadership is the number one factor that determines whether someone quits a job. And I can tell you that that's-- I saw that to be true in private industry. There was an old saying that people don't quit companies, they quit leaders. And so I find that to be true. So with that, I would ask if Senator Murman would yield to a few questions.

DeBOER: Senator Murman, will you yield?

MURMAN: Yes.

von GILLERN: Thank you, Senator Murman. I'm curious the-- in the drafting of the bill, how you arrived at a 5X multiplier, not 4X or 6X or how, how was that arrived at? Because I don't know that-- I'm failing to see a logic in what that achieves, but I'm curious to know what your thinking was there?

MURMAN: Yes. I arrived at 5X because there are several school districts in the state right now that are about at that, I shouldn't say several, a few school districts that are about at that multiplier. Actually, you know, if you look at the sheet I passed out, administrative pay compared to teacher pay, I would have liked to really went lower because I, I think we spend way too much on administration compared to classroom teachers, but I'm just trying to do what I can to control spending going forward on administration. You know, if the upward trajectory keeps going, it's, it's just way out of line.

von GILLERN: Is your, is your primary motivation to, to cut spending on administration or is your primary motivation to raise teacher salaries? Because I think-- I thought I heard both of those mentioned in your opening.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

MURMAN: Yes. We, of course, have a, a limited amount of revenue to spend on education. You know with all good things you have to compensate one way or another, have some kind of a guideline on what we want to spend, whether it's property taxes or funding from the state. So we have to have some say on how we do that. So that's the reason I, I-- I'm just trying to, you know, spend the money where it's most important. And, to me, that is teaching the students and not overseen administration-- by the administration.

von GILLERN: So I'm not sure how much time we have, but if, if not, I'll ask you this the next time on the mic. Would this affect any of the districts in your legislative district, any of the school districts?

MURMAN: I haven't looked that closely, but I don't think so.

von GILLERN: OK. So the districts it would affect are outside of your legislative district, particularly in the metro areas.

MURMAN: Well, like I said, I don't think it affects any right now--

DeBOER: Time, Senators.

MURMAN: --but there are several close.

von GILLERN: OK. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you to Senator Murman and Senator von Gillern. Senator Clouse would like to recognize 18 students, fourth graders from Faith Christian School in Kearney, located in the south balcony. Please rise and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Guereca, you're recognized.

GUERECA: Thank you, Madam President. I rise in opposition to LB300. And I think Senator Murman's intent of increasing teacher pay and, you know, keeping our property taxes low is certainly an admirable one. But I-- again, I don't know if this is the proper tool if it accomplishes that. I want to speak specifically about Omaha Public Schools. And, you know, it's kind of hard to contextualize or to really conceptualize how big of, of an organization Omaha Public Schools is. This is a school district that educates 52,000 students within its bounds. On any given day, over 123 languages are spoken within Omaha Public Schools, 124 schools, 124 schools. That's a, that's a massive organization and employs a little over 9,000 employees, 9,000. That is just around the workforce size of Procter and Gamble. That's a big company. That's a well known, recognizable

brand. Now, if we were to compare the salary of Procter and Gamble to that of Omaha Public Schools, it wouldn't be even close. We love our schools in this state. They are the beating heart of our communities. We need to make sure that the leaders of our school districts are the very best. We've heard about local control letting the free market decide. I agree. Our school boards are elected in our communities. The folks that we elect are people that we live alongside, work alongside, pray alongside. Like Senator Hughes says, if, if we start-- if there's any concern, they'll run into you in the grocery store and let you know. That's the beauty of local government. Why would we want to hamstring folks that know best what their community needs? There are over 200 individual school districts in our great state, representing a plethora of communities that all want the best for their kids. So let's empower these folks that are elected from our neighbors to look after our kids. Because if we're serious about our children who are our future and we want to make them a priority, we need to make sure that the leaders who guide our school districts, who balance the budget, we want to talk about lowering property taxes, I want to make sure that the people who lead our school districts are the very best. And I want to make sure that our school boards are empowered to make that decision, decisions that are very unique to their communities. I certainly wouldn't want to tell the, the school board of Hay Springs or Alliance how they should run their schools, because I'm not from that community. So if we're serious about making sure that, again, not only our kids are receiving the very best education, but at an affordable cost, which in Nebraska is pretty good-- well, we, we have a top 10 education system here in the state, I want to make sure that the person that leads my school district, which educates 50-- over 52,000 kids and has a workforce the size of Procter and Gamble, I want to make sure that leader is the very best. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Guereca. Senator Fredrickson, you're recognized.

FREDRICKSON: Thank you, Madam President. Good morning, colleagues and Nebraskans. I rise today in opposition to LB300 as well. I will say, I think that the intention behind this bill, I can certainly appreciate it. I can understand the concerns that have been brought by proponents of the bill. But I think, ultimately, what this comes down to is we have-- one of the challenges in here as state lawmakers, and I've spoken about this on the mic before, that we have to make policy in law. What we pass in here is something that is going to have to apply to the entire state of Nebraska. So as state lawmakers, obviously, what we pass in here will apply not only to cities like Omaha, but small communities like Sidney or wherever else in the state. So I

think that this policy or this idea probably does make a lot of sense for certain school districts in our state. So I don't think there's-- that's not the concern that I rise with here. What I do rise with is that I-- my opposition is stemmed from-- I don't believe that this makes sense for the school districts in my district, which include OPS, Millard Public Schools, and District 66. So Senator Guereca, I think, made a great speech there. And one thing I want to just sort of lift up again is the incredible work that happens in Omaha with our public education system. You know, we talk a lot about concerns we have about our public education system in here, but I don't think we talk enough about the incredible accomplishments of our public education system and the work that our teachers and administrators do every single day in the city of Omaha. You think about the scale of the work of OPS, for example, the scale and the work of Millard Public Schools, District 66, it's really incredible the work that happens there. My other concern is that when I think about my district in Omaha and in the public education system, the reality is we want to be able to recruit top-tier talent. And when you are searching for superintendents or folks to lead a school district, like Senator Guereca said of 50,000 kids, you are going to have to do a national search. That's just the reality, you have to search nationally for that level of talent. And if we are limited of what we can offer this talent because of a state law that might work for a smaller district or a smaller community, that can really hamper the ability of a district like OPS, of a district like Millard Public Schools, etcetera, that are, frankly, a lot larger and are overseeing a lot more students to compensate their leadership in a way that is competitive with the reality of the market that we live in. The bigger picture here, I think, that we are talking a little bit around is, I think, teacher compensation and teacher pay. And my sense is that this bill is stemming from a couple of things. One is, obviously, I think more of a level payment system within the education system, as well as the property tax related concern. And I, I, I, I, I appreciate that concern. I agree with those concerns. But I think the larger discussion here then is how do we ensure that our teachers are compensated at a way that reflects the work that they do? And we don't necessarily need to see that as in direct conflict with how we compensate our leadership. So I, I think that we need to have-- look at this more holistically. Like I said, what makes sense in some parts of the state does not always make sense in other parts of the state. When we're talking about the reality of compensating leadership of very large school districts in our urban areas, we need to be able to have competitive offerings, otherwise we are not going to attract skilled, talented, strong leaders, which is exactly what we need and

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

which is exactly what Nebraskans deserve in their leadership in our public education system. So for those reasons, I will oppose LB300. Thank you. I yield the rest of my time.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Fredrickson. Senator Murman, you're recognized.

MURMAN: Thank you, Madam President. When I brought this bill, I knew it was going to be an uphill battle. I think, quickly, I had a lot of support because I think all-- we can almost all agree that we pay too much to administration compared to the frontline teachers, classroom teachers. With the limited amount of funding that we do have to spend on education, we need to direct more of it toward actual teaching in the classroom. So I had a lot of support very early. There is a lot-- I, I think the Rotunda out here is, is the fullest I've ever seen it with lobbyists and those that are opposed to this bill, public officials, because they're, they're very concerned about controlling these public funds that are going to, too much toward administration compared to teaching. And I, I see a steady stream of people going out with-- of senators going out with notes to talk to their advocates for their administrators. So I'm not surprised with all of the opposition and even some supporters that are, are getting very fuzzy now after talking to their local administrators-- local, local administrator advocates, I should say. And I want to-- you know, we've heard a lot about the free market so far. There really is not-- we're not talking about a free market when we're talking about public education, because these are public schools. Well, both public and private. But the public schools are-- there's just a, a few that this bill would even come close to affecting. And there, there really is no free market there. I was on the school board, by the way, when we hired a superintendent and we-- the first thing, or one of the first things we did was, of course, hire outside consultants to try and find the superintendents or get-- to get candidates for us. And then after we saw the applicants, the finalists, we looked at an array similar to what we do when we look at trying to determine teacher pay. So I'm concerned that this array that all schools look at, the, the smaller schools, the bigger schools, and, by the way, quite often the smaller school administration, it's a stepping stone up to the larger school-- schools to get more pay. And when you look at the array, it just naturally raises the pay that administrators are-- can receive. And, of course-- and we're not just talking about the top administrator. The administrators that are under the head superintendent, their pay is based on what the top administrator receives. So I think there will be-- if, if we could pass this bill-- you know, like I said, it doesn't affect anybody right now, or at least not in-- not very-- not,

not in a big way. But down the road it could make some difference at least on-- and give local school districts some support and, and not overly compensating administration compared to the teachers. And, you know, I, I just refer to the handout that I passed out that shows what administrative pay has done since 1950 through 1922 [SIC], and that's the most recent one I could find. And I think the disparity has only increased since that time. So I, I just think this is the start in, at least, having some control, because this is public funds that comes from the state to support the larger schools. And that's what we're talking about. They, they-- the larger schools do get a lot of funding from the state, typically about 50%. So from the state we should have some say as to how much is spent on administration compared to frontline teachers. So with that, thank you very much, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Murman. Senator Hallstrom, you're recognized.

HALLSTROM: Thank you, Madam President. Colleagues, I rise to join the chorus in opposition to AM168 and LB300. I believe the legislation would handicap local school boards and the schools and communities that they serve when it comes to recruiting and retaining quality leaders for our school districts. Senator Brandt started down the, the path of some legal concerns, and when you look at the landscape we currently have, I believe two methodologies for altering school teacher compensation. The first are the local school boards and the teachers association's negotiations. If those reach an impasse, we'd got the Commission of Industrial Relations to try and resolve those differences. I don't believe we need to interject a third layer of teacher compensation revision authority. In addition, I believe the provisions of AM168 are in conflict with the state tenure act. The provisions of the amendment provide expressly that a contract with the superintendent is to be invalidated and the excess compensation to be returned. And I think those would most likely be seen as, as violating that particular part of the law. And, finally, I think there's also some constitutional infirmities with regard to the contracts clause under both the U.S. and the State Constitution with respect to potential impairment of contractual obligations. And with that, and for those reasons, I again stand opposed to AM168 and LB300. I'd yield my time back to the chair.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Hallstrom. Senator Hughes, you're recognized.

HUGHES: Oh. Thank you, Chairwoman. OK, so I'm back on the mic. A couple of things I wanted to mention. One thing that we need to keep in mind is that we have capped what schools can spend, what they can tax for, and what they can spend. So that's what you're leaving up to that school board to decide of that money, how they spend it. So I think that's in there. I think a conversation needs to be-- and I've been talking to a few people out here, and, and maybe this is an interim study or something for next year. But the concern is-- one, I, you know, hear, oh, the superintendents, oh, they're paid too much. But, but I think what really the conversation needs-- it's not just the top superintendent, it's all the levels of administration. Right? We have seen administration grow. And if we really want to have a conversation about school spending and what's too much, what's not enough, I think there's two things that need to happen. Maybe we need to do a deep dive in how much administration do we have compared to teachers and, and working staff and has that, has that administration grown exponentially? And if that's growing exponentially, it doesn't really as much matter how each one of those administer-- administrators, their pay is, but as a, as a group, how much is getting paid there and what percent those are. So I, I feel like that's a little bit maybe what this bill is trying to get at, but it's, it's nit-picking one little micro piece. And I think the conversation needs to be broader. If we're looking at this bill to increase pay to teachers, that, that's not this bill, that, that's something else, that's a whole different conversation and a whole different look. So I think that's worthy. I, I will also say I hear, you know, there's so much administration, but from being on school board, this body has got a lot of requirements that have come through it. That's what-- first-- when I first started watching the Legislature-- why did I watch it? Because every, every law that comes down for schools, it's like all of a sudden now we needed this multicultural report and we need this, and schools need to do this. And every time somebody is pulling the information for this report or doing the-- I was on the civics committee and we had to have two outside meetings on top of our regular school board meeting. And you need to make sure this, this, and this are happening. There's an administrator that's making sure those things are happening and doing that report and gathering that information. So I'm going to argue this body has inflated the amount of administration we needed. And I know some of this comes from federal requirements as well. And I, I think that's where Governor Pillen had a, you know, kind of clean, quote unquote, clean the closets bill was to try to address some of those things that is just making more work, more administration for the schools to do. So I, I feel like that's a different conversation. But

this bill is maybe taking a little peck at that. So I, I think that's something that we maybe should look at going forward. But I just don't think this is the right vehicle for it. Before my time's up, I did-- I had mentioned prior that I-- we-- our office had done a, a superintendent pay interim study not last fall but the fall before, LR152. And we-- it was just for the state of Nebraska-- and we took current superintendent salaries and we, we, we plotted them on graphs and we, we plotted them out based on total enrollment. So student enrollment. We plotted them out based on the district population, meaning the whole, the whole district in terms of all the people in that district. We plotted them out on median household income in, in-- so for money and how that related, we plotted them out for total teacher FTE. So how many teachers you had compared to the how the superintendent is paying. And if anybody would like a copy of this, I'd be very happy to email it out. But it, it didn't show crazy variations. And, and I want to mention, too, before my time's up, some superintendents, especially in these small schools-- I was at a meeting the other day and he had to leave early because he had to go drive the bus. So we got to keep that in mind, too, that, you know, you've got districts that are tiny to big. And, and I just don't think micromanaging this one little piece is going to have the effect that, that is thought to maybe come about. And I-- I'm, I'm welcome to the bigger conversation of administration and that percent and that total. So thank you. I yield the rest of my time.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Hughes. Senator Clouse, you're recognized.

CLOUSE: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I very seldom get on the mic. I just sit and listen and then formulate my own opinions, and then you can see where I'm at when I cast my vote. This particular situation with this bill, I never have liked it, watching it from afar when it was introduced previously. And this doesn't change my mind any. And so I rise in, in opposition to this particular bill for, for several reasons. One of them as a long-term elected official or a long-time elected official with, with city government, I never wanted to play in somebody else's sandbox because they would turn around and they would look at what we're doing and not have the full depth of the details that you're dealing with. When we're talking about the schools, I believe that's local control. And I believe that if your constituencies and your school are, are not supportive of it, then they, they can take care of that by the ballot box. If they think that someone's-- their school board is not representing them, then that's the direction they need to go with that. And, obviously, it varies by school district. We've heard a lot of that discourse here today, and I am in full support of our teachers and our superintendents. They have

tough jobs. And when I looked at the chart that was presented, it was, it was alarming, I'll grant that. But I don't think the, the result of this bill is going to lower that top. I think what it's going to do is raise the bottom up to match the top or get closer, and that's just going to cost everyone, so. I believe that there's things that the, the state can do. If you really want to control what's being spent, then look at the things we can't control and that's the amount of, of support that we do give our public school systems. So anyway, I just wanted to state that I am in opposition to this, and I will yield the rest of my time. Thank you.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Clouse. Senator Lonowski, you're recognized.

LONOWSKI: Thank you, Ms. President. I've heard a lot of banter this morning about education, everyone seems to weigh-in and know about education. I taught for 35 years. I've gone through several superintendents. I consider every one of them good in their own way. None of them made great superintendent pay. They all make good superintendent pay. I assume if they were worried about money, they would have moved on rather than stay in our district for a long, long time. How do we get them? How do we keep them? I think we had a school with a great reputation, and I think we had a school with loyalty. And I think both those matters more than money. So I do, I do encourage local control. But I also question what happens when local control might not be working, or maybe it didn't work in the past, and now we've got to this point. Paying higher administrative salaries does not guarantee higher or better students. Look at ACT scores. Is that, is that how we should control the pay? Look at test scores among the school or the district. Obviously, your answer is going to be those two are not equivalent. I also think we, we do superintendent searches and we look outside of our state like we're going to get some magical formula. I would argue in Lincoln Public Schools, the next best principals and the next best superintendents are probably in Lincoln Public Schools. They're probably-- they're teaching and know what's going on already. Sometimes we think going outside makes it better, and certainly we want to attract outside candidates. I just don't think that the, that the administrative way is always, is always the way. I support Senator Murman's bill, but we have to move cautiously because I also support local control. In closing, I just think we-- you know, we're really not talking about very many districts at all when we say five times the amount of a teacher, with teachers making \$40,000, five times that is \$200,000. And, and that's a good wage. So I think we need to be careful. The other part of this, I worry about somebody out in-- I worry about the small town superintendent saying,

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

well, they think we should be making five times the amount of our teachers. They're not. Very few school districts are even close to that. So as we look at this, we need to, we need to move forward cautiously, and I do support Senator Murman's bill.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Lonowski. Senator Wordekemper, you're next in the queue.

WORDEKEMPER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm opposed to this bill, and I'm, I'm going to look at it fairly simple that I think it's kind of out of our wheelhouse. And I've heard this from our school districts when we're talking about property taxes, things like that. You know, let us, let us run our schools. We don't want government overreach. So I would use that sentiment on this. I've heard from a couple of my school districts. They're opposed to this. And, and I'll probably stand my ground on that. I will let them run their schools and their pay how they want. And I would hate for the Legislature to dictate what my pay would have been on the fire department or the chief's pay or any of that. I don't believe we need to step there. Thank you. I'll yield my time.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Wordekemper. Senator Dungan, you're recognized.

DUNGAN: Oh, shocking. Good morning, colleagues. Thank you, Madam President. I stand generally opposed to LB300, and I just wanted to make sure that I had a chance to explain some of my frustrations or, I guess, concerns with this bill. I do think that the intention overall is good. I understand that we're trying to make sure that we're not paying administrators so much more than teachers, because I understand that both serve a very important role, but I always want to make sure that we have, as has been said by many other colleagues, the best and the brightest teaching our children. And I think that, unfortunately, a reality of the situation is that we just have to make sure that we are competitive in our pay in order to get good administrators and good teachers. So I am always in favor of paying teachers more. I am always in favor of getting the best folks in the classroom, but I also think we need the best people leading the ship on a lot of these issues. And in order to do so, we need to be pulling applicants from all over the country to come to Nebraska, to come to LPS, in my circumstance, and make sure that they are doing everything they possibly can to help our kids. So, again, I appreciate Senator Murman's efforts on this. I understand this can be tangentially related to an effort for property tax relief, but I just think this isn't the way to do it. And I think we have-- always have to make sure

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

we're supporting our schools, both in Lincoln and across the whole state. So with that, I would yield the rest of my time. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Dungan. Senator Hansen, you're recognized.

HANSEN: Thank you, Madam President. Well, I'd like to speak a little bit about what some of my colleagues are mentioning on the, on the microphone today about in relation to LB300 and the following amendment. I'm still undecided on where I'm at with the bill, but I just want to give maybe a little point, counterpoint to some of the argument for or against the bill, actually. The whole idea that, that schools are independent-- independently run organizations-- going to remind my colleagues that these are government-run institutions. And so it is within our purview as a State Legislature to determine certain rules and regulations, including pay for teachers or for superintendents. However, that's not one thing I would necessarily like to touch too much unless we had to, which is the whole purpose of this bill. Because out of the \$4.5 billion, I think the state, our public education system gets-- \$1.7 billion of that comes from the state. But then you also have local, which is your property taxes, which everybody knows is a significant amount. City county funds, also federal funds and grants make up the entirety of typically where schools get a lot of their funding from. And so for us to come in here and then actually maybe say, hey, look, we think maybe some people are getting paid too much, and to have a debate about that, I think, is totally within our right to do. And I'm glad we're having it, actually. Let's talk about local control. I do like our school systems to be under more local control than state control, and definitely more state control than federal control, which is by far the worst type of control. And so I like the idea of leaving it up to our local entities, determine what they want to tax their citizens and determine the pay for their teachers and administration. Again, within our right to kind of question that which is the purpose of this bill. And so it is also our responsibility as the State Legislature to guard the purse strings of the Nebraska taxpayer, which I think is the purpose of this bill. Anything that we determine might be causing too much of a, a burden on the Nebraska taxpayers, I think, is our right to discuss. And I'm glad we're up here doing that. Let's also talk about the idea-- I love the idea when we talk about the free market up here. This is great. I'm a, I'm a free-market capitalist, I love Hayek, I love Milton Friedman, some of my economic heroes. And so we're coming up here talking about how we should pay pretty much the CEO of a school system market value. I think even up here it was brought up the idea that Procter and Gamble was a, was a company that was brought up

about that might have been my more employment size, but when it comes to the pay, the CEO of Procter and Gamble, I believe, they get about \$22 million. That includes benefits, that includes stock holdings, that includes salary, other benefits. So I can't imagine I would ever hear any of my colleagues up here against this bill talking about how we need to leave it up to market value for superintendents to ever talk about how much we pay a CEO in the private industry ever again. That is by far more driven by market value than anything else. How much they're worth and how much a private industry is willing to pay for them. I don't care if it's \$1 million. I don't care if it's \$50 million. Not for up to me to determine it, but it's up to that company to determine it, and what they think is market value, which is exactly what a lot of people opposed to this bill are saying right now. Leave it up to them. They're worth it. And, you know, this is not disparaging what superintendents get paid right now. I think if the school system determines they, they-- they're worth it and they need somebody that, that's going to improve the, the livelihood and education of our students in Nebraska, great. Go for it. Pay for it. Again, it's our question-- our, our, our right to question that. And less government control, that's another great one I'd love to hear. Let's have less government control on our school systems. Which is exactly what some of us try to do with the idea of less government control on private education. I think there should be less government control on private education, and the idea that if people want to use their taxpayer dollars to go to private education, I think they should. I think it's a conversation, hopefully, we will have this year. So I just want to keep some of these notions in mind when we talk about bills such as this. The idea of the free market, the idea of paying somebody what they're worth in market value, the idea of less government control. So I look forward to that on the following bills the rest of the year from people discussing that currently. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Hansen. Senator Murman, you're recognized.

MURMAN: Thank you, Madam President. There's been a lot of discussion about we want to attract out-of-state superintendents, and I don't think our experience with that in the past has, at best, been questionable. We do attract out-of-state superintendents because we do pay very well in the state on superintendent pay. And as I said several times, my goal isn't, isn't totally to reduce superintendent pay, it's actually to direct more of our limited funding toward the classroom teachers, where I think it can be more effective and, and doing what's best in teaching our-- the students in the state. So talking about out-of-state superintendents, I mentioned in the

opening, Chicago Public Schools, I think the size and even diversity of Chicago Public Schools would far exceed any schools that we have in, in Nebraska. The last superintendent in Chicago Public Schools made \$360,000 and represented 325,000 students. The superintendent at LPS represents a much smaller number of students, one-eighth the number of students, and makes a very comparable, actually more bigger salary, \$333,720. So I, I don't think there's any very-- I mean, it's-- it wouldn't be a good argument to say that we aren't competitive and, and even very generous in what we pay top administrators in the state of Nebraska. And, by the way, layers of administration was also brought up. And I do agree, we, we have too many layers of administration often in our schools in Nebraska. But the lower-- the layers under the, the top administrator in a school, the compensation for those administrators is based, at least to a large degree, on what the pay is for the top administrator. So we're doing what we can with this bill to protect the taxpayer. 50% of the funding in our larger schools in Nebraska, approximately, is coming from the state so we need to not only protect the, the, the taxpayer that pays income tax and property taxes or, excuse me, sales taxes to the state of Nebraska, protect that taxpayer, but also give some protection to the local school board to protect the property taxpayer and school districts also by giving them some support and at least some control over what the pay is for administration. The constitution-- constitutionality of this bill was questioned, and I will just read a little bit about the constitutionality here. III-18: Local or special laws prohibit section says that the Legislature shall not pass local or special laws providing for the management of public schools. So on the face you might think, well, that includes superintendent pay, but it doesn't because it says the term management is not specified-- specifically defined in the Nebraska Constitution. However, in Title 92, Rule 27 Nebraska Department of Ed regulations and standards for practices criteria states that management shall mean controlling, supervising, and guiding the efforts of others. And according to this definition, it does not include regulating salaries. So I think we are safe constitution-- constitutionally. So, again, we're talking about public dollars. We're not talking about the free-market private business. And that's why I, I see the need to at least have some control over the administrative pay, and at the same time, direct more of our pay toward frontline teachers, actually the classroom, and use our tax--

DeBOER: That's time, Senator.

MURMAN: --tax money wisely. Thank you.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Murman. Senator Guereca, you're recognized.

GUERECA: Thank you, Madam President. Again, I, I rise in opposition to LB300 and AM168. It's an interesting amendment, and I've already heard it from a couple senators that have already heard it from their supes in the smaller school districts where, certainly, those superintendents don't make five times what the starting teacher makes. I think it'd be interesting to see how many school districts of the 200-plus in the state actually pay their superintendent. So if we take the average salary, \$40,000 for a starting teacher, times five is \$200,000, how many school districts pay their superintendents \$200,000? And if every one of those probably over 200, supes say, hey, I want to make \$200,000. What will that do to the budgets of our school districts? We'll probably I have to raise property taxes to pay for that pay bump. So we just need to be mindful of that. But, again, I want to turn back to, to OPS, and this beautiful school district that we have. Again, 52,000 students and 123 languages spoken on any given day. I think that's why we love that statistic. Shows the incredible strength of OPS, the, the, the clashing of cultures that will make those students better citizens when they come out. But, again, it's an incredibly complex organization that employs over 9,000 people, the size of Procter and Gamble, 124 schools, gosh, knows how many buildings. So, again, I want to make sure that the person that is leading this complex organization is the very best to maximize efficiencies, to lower that-- you know, if we're concerned about administrative bloat, well, let's make sure that the figurehead is talented, has the necessary background to be able to lower that administrative burden. So, again, I trust our school boards. I trust our school board members. I believe in local control. I believe in our school boards. Many folks, many members in this body are former school board members. And they'll tell you, like Senator Hughes says, if folks think that something's wrong, they'll show up to those-- to their school board. And that's the beauty of local government. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Guereca. Senator Lonowski, you're recognized.

LONOWSKI: Thank you, Madam-- thank you, Madam President. And, and I still go back to there does need to be local control, but we're also responsible to the taxpayers of our district. And I'm looking at the, at the chart that Senator Murman handed out, the 99-- the 95% growth in administrative pay compared to, compared to the staff pay and somehow, somehow school districts, school boards have to "reconciliate" the two so that maybe they're growing at the same rate.

And I, certainly, don't want the Legislature weighing in on such a topic. The fact that Senator Hughes said there's a study out there, I appreciate that. That's what we need. We need to find out exactly the percentage of, of schools that are affected by such legislation. We need to find out if it's effective at all. And, and we need to make sure that we're supporting taxpayers at the same time we're supporting schools, meaning teachers, students, and administrators. And, and I also like the idea of, of Senator Hughes when she brought up that maybe we need to look at the number of administrators throughout these districts. So we, we argue that an administrator or a superintendent-- pardon me, Madam, Madam President, my ADD is kicking in because of all the back noise. Thank you. I always wanted one of those. And, and so we need to really control, you know, we need to look at this study that Senator Hughes is talking about. And we need to try and make sure that we leave this in the school board's purview. But I see Senator Murman's bill more as a not a rule, but a guideline, maybe, maybe rails to, to keep it from getting further out of whack. But I maintain my support for Senator Murman's bill and I yield my time.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Lonowski. Senator Conrad, you're recognized.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. I rise in support of the measure. I supported this measure in the last biennium and have supported it again this year. As you can see, it enjoyed broad support from an incredibly diverse Education Committee, both in the last biennium and again this year. Senator Murman and others have done a good job of lifting up a host of the different issues involved here. And to be clear, this isn't a panacea or the only approach to addressing accountability or teacher pay, but it is one piece in a much, much broader effort when it comes to addressing teacher shortage, trying to recruit and retain top talent in our classrooms. And I really want to acknowledge the fact that I think Senator Murman and others on Education Committee, including myself, have worked really hard on building stipends and loan forgiveness and apprentice programs and increasing funding for schools and special ed and trying to keep our great public schools great and lessen the burden on local property taxpayers. But another piece that I do want to lift up, I know that because this is part of the debate this morning, when we looked at this issue in the last biennium, some senators today had questions as to whether the chart Senator Murman passed out was national or local. I know that my friend Senator Briese, now Treasurer Briese, brought to the committee in the last biennium similar statistics and charts about administrative growth and bloat in Nebraska schools, and I'm sure those are easily ascertainable if

people are interested in looking at that. I'd also just like to note a few other issues here. Friends, the, the Rotunda is pretty busy today, and I see a flurry of notes going back and forth, and I think that shows, of course, school districts are within their right to retain lobbyists and to advocate for their positions. But I also think hopefully it's illustrative of how misplaced priorities are. I've heard more about this bill and concerns about the hundreds of thousands of dollars that schools already pay, and will continue to pay their top leadership from the school and education lobby, than I've heard about solutions to fix option enrollment for kids with disabilities. And the list goes on and on and on and on. I'd also like to note that look at the legislative districts at a glance, and you've heard me talk about this before. My legislative district is the second most economically challenged, behind only my friend Senator McKinney's, where the average family makes well below the federal poverty line. It's a matter of equity for me and my community as well. I also think that it's quite interesting that the same school leaders who spend significant amounts of money on high-paid lobbyists, who have spent a great deal of time and energy trying to kill this bill, brought forward a solution to the Education Committee level, saying, hey, flip it around, this is actually a better way to go about your objectives. Senator Murman took their advice and did just that in the amendment, and now people are attacking him for working with them in good faith. The same superintendents have fought against basic transparency in regards to public records and open meetings laws. The same superintendents have fought against basic transparency in regards to ed tech preying upon our kids. The same superintendents have fought hard against their practices that send poor kids to collections for school lunch debt. And you know what? We overcame opposition in many of those instances when our partners in local schools brought forward their legitimate points of opposition because it's our choice in this body to set a different direction when the schools get it wrong. And in those instances, they did. And in those instances, we corrected it. So it's not to say superintendents aren't smart and caring and have hard jobs. They do. And they're paid well for them before and after this bill if it's successful, which is two, three, four times in excess the average family wage of most of the people living in our districts. I don't represent--

DeBOER: Time, Senator.

CONRAD: --a school district, I represent the people of Lincoln. Thank you, Mr. President.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 27, 2025

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Conrad. Senator Moser would like to recognize 36 fourth graders from Woodland Park Elementary in Norfolk. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Madam President, some items. Your Committee on Judiciary, chaired by Senator Bosn, reports LB124, LB371, LB133, LB136, LB404 to General File. Your Committee on Government, Military and Veterans Affairs, chaired by Senator Sanders, reports LB32 and LB560 to General File, both having committee amendments, and as well as LR, your Committee on Government, Military and Veterans affairs, chaired by Senator Sanders, reports legislative-- LR29 to the Legislature for further consideration. Your Committee on the Executive Board, chaired by Senator Hansen, reports LB364 to General File. Committee report from the Natural Resources Committee concerning gubernatorial appointments to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Committee report from the Natural Resources Committee concerning gubernatorial appointments to the Nebraska Ethanol Board. Amendments to be printed from Senator Ballard to LB415. Notice of room change, the Business and Labor Committee will be meeting in Room 1023 on Monday, March 3, and the General Affairs Committee will be meeting in Room 1510 on Monday, March 3. Business and Labor, Room 1023, General Affairs, Room 1510, both on Monday, March 3. Name adds: Senator John Cavanaugh name added to LB404 and Senator Sanders name added to LB530. Finally, Madam President, a priority motion, Senator Jacobson would move to adjourn the body until Friday, February 28 at 9:00 a.m.

DeBOER: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. The question is, shall the Legislature adjourn until Monday at 9 a.m.? All those in favor say-- Friday at 9 a.m. All those in favor of Friday at 9 a.m. say aye. All those opposed say nay. We are adjourned.