

ARCH: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber for the fifty-second day of the One Hundred Ninth Legislature, First Session. Our chaplain for today is Reverend William Holoubek, Saint Anthony Catholic church in Bruno, Nebraska. This is in Senator Storm's district. Please rise.

WILLIAM HOLOUBEK: Heavenly Father, we praise you and thank you. We thank you for the gift of your son, Jesus, who took upon our flesh and became man so that he may reveal your face, the face of a loving father, the face of love. By taking upon himself our sins, he suffered rejection and torture from his own; was crucified, died, and was buried, and then rose from the dead in the glory on the third day. In the hope of the resurrection attested to by sacred Scripture and Jewish and Roman historians, we stand today with faith and hope that you-- with you, Lord, all things are possible. We ask and beseech you, Heavenly Father, to release shalom, peace upon this chamber. We call upon that peace which brings light from darkness and order out of disorder to permeate all people and all places in this building; that, with good will, all may labor here together for your glory and honor, and the good of all our Nebraska citizens. Lord Jesus Christ, our God, bless and seal this Chamber with your precious blood poured out for our salvation, and bind any evil afflicting any person. I ask Jesus to send forth his Holy Spirit to completely fill this building, this room, and all its members, present and not present, that all may work here today and this year with a new spirit of peace and mercy. Grant all the gifts of your wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and courage. Father, you revealed yourself in the book of Exodus as a God of mercy, slow to anger, and of great kindness. May your peace, your kindness, and your mercy fill and move the hearts of all who hear this prayer. Touch the hearts of all elected officials, and release the light of your truth into the minds of all. Take away any fears that may hinder their work. May your blessing enable them to work together to bring about good in this Legislature, for all the citizens in our state, and the good of our world. Lord, you know all the-- all our needs better than we do. In the name of Jesus, I command the healing of any who are ill with any type of disease, pain, or illness; in the name of Jesus, I call down all the healing powers of heaven to flow into this Chamber room, and to enter into any pain or illness, any brokenness, any heartbreak, any confusion or dismay, and bring healing here today. Jesus, may you sit-- saturate this Capitol with your love. With great confidence, we claim today the graces needed to bring about your holy and providential will for the good of our legislators, their families and staff; our state and its citizens. Jesus, let your holy angels remain here to light, to guard, to rule, and to guide. And so, I

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invite you, if you desire, to pray together the words our Lord Jesus gave us. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. And may Almighty God bless all of you, your families, your staff. The name of the Father and the son and the Holy Spirit descend upon you and be with you forever. Amen.

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

KAUTH: Colleagues, please join me in the pledge. 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 fifty-second day of the One Hundred Ninth Legislature, First Session. Senators, please record your presence. Roll call.

ARCH: Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: There is 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. Agency reports electronically filed with the Legislature can be found on Nebraska Legislature's website. And additionally, a report of registered lobbyists for March 27, 2025 can be found in today's Journal. That's all I have at this time.

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

CLERK: Mr. President, first time on the agenda: General File, LB415 introduced by Senator Ballard. It's a bill for an act relating to the Nebraska Healthy Families and Workplaces Act; it amends Sections 2, 3, and 4 of Initiative Law 2024 No. 436; redefines terms; changes provisions relating to paid sick time; harmonizes provisions; repeals the original section. Bill was read for the first time on January 17 of this year and referred to the Business and Labor Committee; that committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments.

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When the Legislature left the bill yesterday, Mr. President, pending was the committee-- the bill itself, the committee amendment, a division of said committee amendment, AM770, as well as a motion to bracket from Senator McKinney.

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

McKINNEY: Thank you, Mr. President. One-minute refresher, right? No? Five minutes? Oh. That's great. Well, good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Nebraskans. Continue this conversation about paid sick leave and making sure that we keep to the spirit of what the voters wanted. But most importantly, from a policy perspective, make sure that whatever is passed in this Legislature is something that, one, doesn't diminish what the voters passed, but also it's something that actually works in practicality, but also isn't going to negatively impact people from just multiple perspectives. You think about labor and what some of these proposals and some of these amendments might have on our labor industry. I don't think a lot of the things that were proposed were considered. We need to think about, you know, workers. We think about business a lot, but we don't think about our labor community, and that has been the tone of this session that I've highlighted multiple times, many times this session, that-- are we working for the people, or are we working for business? And some of the things that I've saw proposed or being proposed or discussed, especially on this topic, I think we need to take some time. I mean, we've already taken a lot of time and, you know, we'll come to a point where votes have to be taken, and we really need to understand what will happen, and we need to consider workers and how this will affect workers from a policy perspective. And how, as well-meaning as you might think you're being with some of these changes that you want because of what the voters voted for overwhelmingly in all of our districts, how it can negative-- negatively have unintended consequences because we need to change things; because they had a take-it-or-leave-it in-- because they had a take-it-or-leave-it approach, we need to make some changes, or we need to fix things. And from experience, just fixing things on the fly, especially on the floor, means we'll be coming back next year to fix those things because we don't think things through all the time. And just making changes for the sake of making changes doesn't always work. That's why we got clean-up bills all the time. We need to clean this up, we need to clean that up. You want to know why? Because we just think of things, we see problems and, at times, we just want to be helpful for whoever we feel like we're representing, and we probably don't take our time or do, you know, due diligence as much as we probably should to kind of think through each scenario of the

things we're proposing at times, even though we probably feel right and justified in our righteousness. But I will tell you, from a policy perspective, a lot of things being proposed will have negative impacts on workers. And you might disagree with the ballot initiative and what it means and what it will do, and how you think it might affect business and those type of things, but it is also clear that Nebraskans and Nebraskan workers wanted this. So, if anything, the one thing we should-- I think everybody should agree on is that we shouldn't negatively impact the people who passed this, especially from a worker perspective, because they wanted this. No matter if you disagree with it, they wanted this. The second house wanted this. So, we should make sure that we at least keep them whole to the spirit of what they passed, because the Legislature didn't pass this; the Legislature dropped the ball on it. The people passed this. Thank you.

ARCH: Time, Senator. Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. I rise in continued opposition to the committee amendment, and I'm generally ambivalent, perhaps opposed or gettable on the underlying measure which has been utilized as a Trojan horse by the business community to go back on a carefully-crafted, narrowly-prescribed fix; that was how LB415 was presented. Nevertheless, I've heard people say during the course of this debate, like, there's only a yea or nay on the ballot initiative. Again, members, any group could have ran a competing ballot initiative just like they did on abortion, so that falls flat. Additionally, they've said it's a take-it-or-leave-it. Well, do you consider yourself a take-it-or-leave-it senator? Do you think that senator-- that voters who voted for you voted for every single position that you hold, or agreed with you most of the time when presented the choice? Where in your campaign materials did you promise you were going to rush into the Legislature and undercut the will of the voters? How many speeches did you give in your home district, being clear about your intentions that when you don't trust the voters, when you don't like the outcome, you go and you cut it up into Swiss cheese and you pick and choose what you like or the business community tells you to like? If you weren't honest about what you were going to do in your campaign, then you shouldn't vote in support of an amendment that undercuts the will of the voters. This paid sick leave initiative hasn't even taken effect yet. The dire claims that opponents of sick leave are bringing forward-- earned sick leave, mind you-- have not happened in our sister states that have done something similarly. If your main concern is detassellers, then put forward a narrow amendment about detassellers. That's not what you have done. It has age restrictions, it has industry restrictions, it has business

restrictions. It undercuts the private right of action and enforcement, which makes it toothless. There seems to be a fundamental misunderstanding, particularly by new members, that the people are somehow akin to a legislative committee. They are not. They have coequal opportunities and gravity to legislate, to legislate, particularly when the Legislature does not heed their call, as is the case for paid, earned leave. I also want to talk about one component of the paid sick leave law that was a central theme in the campaign that has not been addressed in detail during the debate to unwind the will of the people. The necessity of earned sick leave is critical for victims and survivors of domestic violence. An estimated 1.4 million Nebraskans will experience some form of intimate partner or sexual violence in their lifetime. What does this mean for survivors, if they don't have an ability to have earned sick leave? How will they have time to physically heal? How will they have time to emotionally heal? How will they have time to take care of children? How will they have time to seek counseling or medical care? You're forcing victims and their families of domestic violence to choose between a paycheck and a day off to attend to the effects of violence. This was a key theme in the election, and no one has addressed it here. No one has talked about how carving up and carving out thousands and thousands of workers from protections provided in the earned sick leave initiative will be dealt with. Instead, they closed their ears and they closed their heart and they closed their mind to even the most vulnerable in society who are working, and that's wrong. We're going to have plenty of time today to continue debate and deliberations in regards to the actual substance of the measure that was before voters, LB415, and the hostile committee amendment brought forward thanks to the introduction by Senator Paul Strommen--

ARCH: Time, Senator.

CLERK: --to unwind the will of the voters. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. I rise in support of MO111, opposed to AM770, and in neutral on LB415. It's not what I would call my favorite, but it's, you know, it's a, a compromise, I guess. I did want to share with everyone that the printed copies of the index journal-- I'd hold it up, but we can't use props-- are now available in the clerk's office, and I'm very excited about mine. I'm just going to carry mine around today because I have been waiting for this since we started. And if you don't know what the index journal is, you should definitely check it out. It's in a

lovely-- what's this, robin's blue? And Carol, up front, is our index clerk, and she puts this together, and it is a very-- I-- the-- I can't tell you the amount of times I've heard people say it would be helpful to know what other bills deal with this topic. Ha ha! The index. It's got all the bills that-- the bills that deal with abuse, Acts, Accountability and Disclosure Commission. The, the Acts section is quite large, like Pharmacy Act, Protection Act, 911 System Services Act, the, the Acts [INAUDIBLE] that's several pages long. Wow. We did a lot on that subject. And then, administrative department, et cetera, et cetera. So, anyways. I love, I love the index. I love learning more things. So, just wanted to give a shout out to Carol and her hard work on the index, and thank her for yet again another spectacular installment. I would like-- I will-- my, my one criticism is what edition is this? I-- it says the One Hundred Ninth Legislature, First Session, so is there an index for every single session? And how many indexes has Carol personally been in charge of? I'd like to find that out. I'll report back at a later date after I speak to Carol about it. But anyways, thank you for the index, Carol. I really appreciate it. And also, thank you to Jenni for the Journal-- she's the journal clerk-- because that, actually, is really an essential daily thing that we have. I don't know how many of you look at the Journal, but it's kind of like if you-- I try to-- I don't always get to it, but I try to sit down in the morning when I'm on the floor and pull up yesterday's Journal to see what was read across that I missed, and that is on our website. And then, at the end of the session, there's a full Journal that is printed, and also, there is that full Journal on the website. So, it's very convenient in that you can look at the Journal by day, or you can go and just look at the whole Journal and look at it. But it helps-- so, if you were wondering, like, did I miss a bill being read across, you can just search it in the Journal and see if it was read across. So, that's how I try to keep track of things, and it's-- useful tools. I don't recall if that was part of orientation or not, but I don't-- if it was, I don't recall it from orientation; it's more tricks of the trade that I've picked up along the way. Kind of like figuring out how to read the worksheet. I didn't know how to do that either. I may as well give a shout-out, while I'm giving shout-outs to the clerks, to Morgan, who is our amendment clerk. Yes, I got that right. So, I have had a, a long history of a relationship with the amendment clerks over the years of spending a lot of time going up to their desks and handing them my floor amendments that are handwritten on the orange, goldenrod sheets. Anyways, I just wanted to, you know, give this informational thing this morning because I am-- I'm kind of tired and I don't want-- I'm tired of, and and also physically tired-- but I just am tired of

saying over and over again that we are undoing the will of the people of Nebraska, and that doesn't sit well with me. I said to someone this morning that if my grandmother were still alive, she would be very disappointed in everybody because this is not a public service, undoing the will of the people. We should be lifting people up, not trying to create a system that works for some, not all, so. I think I'm just about out of time. If you want a copy of your own robin's blue egg index, stop by the Clerk's office. I think that's where they're-- they are, and enjoy your weekend reading. I know I'm going to.

ARCH: Time, Senator.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Some senators would like to introduce some special guests today. Senator Spivey and McKinney would like to introduce 23 members of the Urban League of Nebraska from Omaha; they are located in the north balcony. Please rise and be recognized by your Legislature. Senator Hardin would like to recognize 50 youth and two group leaders from Empowering Families from Scottsbluff, Nebraska. They are also located in the north balcony. Please rise, be recognized by your Legislature. Returning to the queue, Senator Juarez, you are recognized to speak.

JUAREZ: Good morning. Thank you. Good morning to my colleagues and everyone watching. I wanted to just go over some more support for why paid sick leave is important to our families in Nebraska. Recently, we had an equal pay day on our calendar, and it's a reminder of the persistent gender wage pay gap and the financial inequality that continues to impact working women. The wage gap, which on average has women earning about \$0.82 for every dollar earned by men, contributes to the long-term economic insecurity of women and their families, and the gap can even be bigger for women of color. Over a 40-year career, this gap can result in hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost wages, impacting lifetime earnings, savings, and retirement security. And I can truly attest to this fact because this is an example of what my mom endured, as she was the one who stayed home to raise her family, and she was the one who always stayed home when we were sick. And because women are most likely to take on unpaid caregiving roles, this can lead to career interruptions and also lower lifetime earnings. Nebraska has one of the highest populations of working women, nearly 80% of school age children in Nebraska have working parents, and yet, most hard-working Nebraskans don't have access to paid sick days. Additionally, 43% of working mothers, which include 54% Latina and 42% black mothers, do not have access to paid sick leave, which is

particularly concerning given that women should-- shoulder the disproportionate share of caregiving duties in the United States. Women in service sector jobs, especially customer service, health care, education, and finance are 11 percentage points less likely than men to have access to paid sick leave. Without paid sick leave, caregivers are faced with the impossible choice of sending their sick children to school or losing a day of pay. Too many Nebraskans have been there before. You get the call from school or daycare, and your child is sick. Then, the calculations begin. Can you afford to leave work and miss pay? What kind of impact will missing that pay have on your monthly budget? What bill or basic need will you have to skip this month to care for your sick child? It's an impossible choice, and no Nebraskan should have to choose between their paycheck and their health or the health of their family. When working women have to take time off work without pay, this adds to the gender wage gap. The majority of Nebraska voters passed an incremental paid sick leave measure so that workers could earn one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked, earning up to five days off per year for small companies, and up to seven off per year for larger companies. This allows all working Nebraskans time off to care for themselves or their loved ones if they get sick without missing the pay they need for rent, medical bills, and basic needs like food and clothing. The workers who would benefit the most from paid sick leave policies include women, workers of color, low-wage workers, and service workers; farm workers, and military families. Thank you, and I yield the rest of my time.

ARCH: Senator Lippincott would like to recognize a special guest: Cole Ballard, who is loc-- from Omaha, Nebraska, and he's located under the north balcony. Please rise and be welcome by your Legislature. Returning to the queue, Senator Fredrickson, you're recognized to speak.

FREDRICKSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Nebraskans. So, I continue to rise in strong support of LB415 and in strong opposition to AM770. And I wanted to talk a little bit more about some of what I spoke about yesterday on the mic, and I, I want to just really kind of encourage my colleagues to consider the legislation in front of us not just as a stand-alone bill, but to think of this, again, as a comprehensive vision of what we're doing this year in the Legislature, what we're prioritizing, and how everything that we pass this year in the Legislature is going to interact with each other and impact Nebraska as a whole. And so, you know, again, we have to ask ourselves, what is our-- what is our vision for our state? And if our vision for our state is things like

limiting access to paid sick time, if our vision for our state is creating sub-minimum wage, if our vision for our state is creating more restrictions for access to SNAP benefits, if our vision for our state is to cut off TANF benefits, that's, that's pretty grim. And I think it's a pretty cynical way to view what we could do as a state, and the potential of our state, and the potential of Nebraskans, frankly. I also want to speak a little bit to what I, what I believe is a little bit of fearmongering around what paid sick leave means for, for small businesses. Similar to a number of my colleagues, I've been reached out by a number of small businesses in my district who are very concerned about this amendment. I've mentioned this before, I had a coffee shop in my district that had, I think, seven employees, and they said even if we still decide to offer paid sick leave, we can't overcome the perception of what this is doing. Young people are not going to want to work here because they're going to have the perception that they're not going to have the benefits they would at other businesses. So, they're fearful that less and less people are going to apply to their small businesses. This makes it less attractive to work at a small business. Why would we do that? Why do we want to make this harder on small businesses to say we, too, are worth working for? Especially in cities like Omaha, where they're fighting for workforce. And there's all this talk about, well, high school kids don't need this, they don't need that. Like, let's think hard about how many hours a week a high school student works. Probably 15 hours a week. When I was in high school, I worked, like, 15 to 20 hours a week after school. So, you would have to work a full two weeks to earn one hour of paid sick time. One hour. So, you earn a full day of paid time off after, what, 5 or 6 months? And we're all of a sudden afraid that young people are going to just be cashing in? It, it, it doesn't match how this bill works. I also want to be really clear, the Omaha business chamber was adamantly opposed to attaching these two bills together. Adamantly opposed. They did not want these two bills to go together because they knew that LB415 was clean, probably has 45 votes in here, would sail right through. And that's a testament to Senator Ballard and his work with the stakeholders from across the spectrum. That bill will fly through, no questions asked. The problem is AM770, and everyone knows that that's the issue. Attaching these two bills together was, in my opinion, not a very wise decision because we would not be filibustering this, we would not be having this conversation. The issue is the committee amendment, which, again, hurts small businesses in areas like Omaha and areas like Lincoln, probably areas like Kearney and Grand Island as well. It is my belief these two things should be separate; we should LB415 to create these guardrails and these safeguards in place that everyone agrees to, and

then we can take up this separate measure on a whole 'nother docket. But we shouldn't risk tanking LB415 because a committee amendment was made that was not thought through. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

ROUNTREE: Good morning. Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues, and good morning to all those that are watching online this morning. I just rise again [INAUDIBLE] in support of our motion to bracket this until 6-9-25 and against AM770, but also in support of LB415, which is a good bill. Just looking back at experience, I grew up on a farm down in North Carolina. My first paid job was working in a tobacco field, probably at about 9, 10 years old. Some days, we worked so hard from sunup to sundown, and many times I felt sick, but there wasn't an opportunity not to go to work. All of the monies that we made working in tobacco paid for our school clothes and other things that we needed during that time. So, for those that work in the agriculture business, and those that are-- thou [SIC] young people that are detassellers and everything else, their labor counts. It really counts. So, we don't want to eliminate that part of our population when it comes to our labor and also taking care of them. They won't be in that position always, and they will be those that are sitting in here at this time making legislation for those that are going to come. I drove a school bus when I was in high school-- I don't think students drive today, those are adults. But I drove a school bus and played football, got all of that work then, so I really believe in taking care of our young people, their contributions to the labor force. And so, I continue to get emails from down in the district, and not only down in District 3, but emails from around our state as they watch what we're doing here in the legislation [SIC], ensuring that we do honor the will of our voters. And so, I'm going to stand strong in making sure that their voice is heard. And with that, I'm going to yield, Mr.-- Madam President now. I want to yield the rest of my time to Senator Conrad.

DeBOER: Thank you. Senator Conrad, you are yielded three minutes.

CONRAD: Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Senator Rountree. I always appreciate the passion and experience and perspective that my friend Senator Rountree brings to the debate, and I'm very grateful that he is here. Friends, I wanted to also talk a little bit about process for those of you who maybe haven't been as close to how an initiative or referendum works. So, of course, those who are leading the efforts write ballot language. It is vetted through a process with the Revisors and the Secretary of State. Then, it goes out to the

people. The full text of the measure is available, and an object statement is available as well; each signer is charged with reading it, each circulator is charged with reading it out loud to the signers. And then, after you qualify and meet high hurdles in terms of ballot access for overall signatures and geographic requirements, then, if you meet the requisite number of signatures as verified through our county clerks and county election officials, then you have a ballot question that becomes the people's, not the campaign's. The campaign does not write the ballot question that you see on your ballot; the Attorney General does. The Attorney General wrote the language for the proposed initiative that voters saw in their ballot. And they saw it on their ballot again, and they decided whether or not they wanted to support it or not support it. Maybe they had reservations. Who knows? All we have as an expression of their will is a vote of over 70% of the people that says "yes." Doesn't say yes, asterisk; it doesn't say yes, I cross my fingers; it says "yes." Our job is to implement that. Period. Voters are smart. They understand what they were voting on. Anybody had an opportunity to point out opposition arguments. They didn't; they conceded that at the committee hearing. And the language is what the language is, and the Attorney General wrote it. There was no games on language. That's how initiatives work. You may not like it, but that doesn't mean you have a right to undercut it, unless, of course, you told your voters in your campaign "I'm going to run to Lincoln and undercut your will." "I'm going to run to Lincoln, and the first thing that I'm going to do is pick and choose which parts of democracy I support." If you said that on your campaign materials and in your town hall meetings, well then, sure.

DeBOER: Time, Senator.

CONRAD: -- your vote could follow. But if you didn't, it should be read.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senators Rountree and Conrad. Senator Spivey, you're recognized.

SPIVEY: Thank you, Madam President. And good morning, colleagues, folks watching online, and and folks in the balcony. I think it's a great opportunity, as Urban League of Nebraska is here, as you heard. And so, I think it's relevant to the conversation, and I wanted to give a little background just around the, the Urban League and the impact that they have been making, especially here in Nebraska. So, the Urban League's national movement started in 1910, and it was an effort to assist African American migrants from rural and ur-- urban

southern communities in adjusting to societal and economic problems in the north. The Omaha Urban League was founded in November 28, 1927. In the 1930s, the group focused on domestic and common labor employment opportunities. In 1946, their effort shifted to helping integrate union groups, promote new housing construction, as well as they passed the open occupancy law. In the 1950s, Whitney Moore Young, Jr. served as the executive director of, of the Omaha Urban League, now known as the Urban League of Nebraska, while teaching part-time as one of the first African-American faculty members at UNO. His accomplishments in Omaha included the addition of non-segregation clause to Omaha's public housing code. In 1961, Whitney M. Young, Jr. became the director of the National Urban League until his untimely death in 1971. And I bring this up-- and there's many more accomplishments, and the young people here are a part of a school group that are looking at employment and education and the intersection as we have this conversation about paid sick leave, and I think the arguments of my colleagues and what they have been uplifting this morning and over the last couple of days really illustrate the reason why organizations like Urban League were founded and exist. We know that we have to support working people. We know, and as Senator Juarez mentioned during her time on the mic, that certain groups also have a harder time navigating that. You see that this disproportionately impacts people of color, workers of color, families of color, young people, women in the workforce. And so, as we talk about the work of Urban League here, and why they watch their elected officials at, at work, I think we need to be mindful around what we put forward and the impacts that it has. As Senator Strommen mentioned, we don't want those unintentional impacts. And I support LB415 as-is, the work that Senator Ballard put in with cross-sector partners. I do believe AM770, with the specific language from LB698-- and I believe those are the correct numbers; there's a lot of numbers floating into my head today-- is the issue, right? It cuts out young folks in a way that doesn't make sense. And we've heard numerous stories of folks in this body that have had experience working at 16 and need that time off, and that they're not just here at, at a summer fun job. As I mentioned, I had two full-time jobs at 16; I worked at 20 Grand-- which is no longer in existence, it's now called Marcus Theaters-- and I worked at Target. And I went to school full-time, and, and I would need time off. And so, to have that benefit at 16 years old and to say because this is a young person that they don't have real-life responsibilities is, is irresponsible on our part. It doesn't allow for there to be any type of retribution or accountability if employers do not sit in and provide the leave that the voters decided on. It does-- and, and exempt small businesses, and we know that small

businesses are the, the folks that are employing the most net new employees in our state, but it exempts them. And we've heard from small business owners, myself included, that this is important. And so, while we have folks that are watching us today that are actively working on workforce development, education, and housing issues, we have a responsibility to ensure that we continue to pass policy that aligns to, one, what the voters say, who do not-- that does not erode the work that is happening that they are doing constantly on the front lines. Thank you, Madam President.

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

STROMMEN: Thank you, Madam President. I just wanted to speak to some of the comments that are being made today. So, we have some information from the NFIB, which is the Federation of Independent Businesses, which has over 4,600 members in Nebraska and, 300 members nationwide. Over 95% of NFIB members have ten employees or fewer, and represent every industry from family farms to manufacturers to small-town storefronts. A survey conducted following passage of Initiative 436 found as follows: 76% already offer paid sick leave in some form; more than 44% said it will restrict current paid leave employee benefits; 50% said it will either require suspension of hiring plans or lead to a reduction in the current number of employees; less than 10% reported that it would not lead to an additional cost to their businesses. Specific survey comments-- this is a small business in Burwell with nine full-time employees and 12 part-time employees-- we will eliminate our three high school part-time jobs because this is-- the minimum wage increa-- will-- can no longer-- because of the minimum wage increase as well, we can no longer afford to hire high school employees. Small business in Omaha with eight full-time employees and seven part-time employees: I'm the owner of a small independent pharmacy. I currently have two full-time and three-part time pharmacists. The hourly wage for pharmacists are very high. Between the five pharmacists I employ, I am looking at-- I'm looking at it costing me approximately an additional \$13,000 a year. This isn't including my seven pharmacy technicians and my front counter staff. In total, it will be an additional \$20,000 a year. That's not including myself. That's not-- that's \$20,000 could have been used towards raises for each of my employees. I know a lot of my employees would rather have the raise than the sick leave. Now, I will definitely be thinking twice before I hire another person, and reevaluating raises. So, we can see that this is impacting these smaller businesses. I'm going to continue here. Small businesses in Gering, 21 full-time employees and eight part-time employees: we

currently have a vacation/wellness/personal days benefits that is more advantageous than the election law for anyone who stays with us for 24 months. We plan to revise our program to make it conform. So, we're seeing businesses that are going to possibly have to bring down the level of care that they currently have because it's more affordable. Small business in McCook with four full-time employees and four part-time employees: I have had a retail business for 41 years. Nebraska needs to let small "businessers"-- business owners run their own business without getting involved. We know what our overhead costs are. All of our full-time employees have been with us for five or more years. We know what our overhead payroll costs are. If Nebraska mandates more overhead, we will have no choice but to pass it on to the consumer. It just adds more costs to goods and services. Like I talked about yesterday, cost of goods sold. There's only really two ways to offset that; one is to reduce the number of employees you have, or to increase your costs. And in a lot of our small towns and our rural communities, it's extremely difficult to offset those costs, so. Thank you very much. I appreciate the time.

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

DUNGAN: Thank you, Madam President, and good morning, colleagues. I do rise in favor of the bracket motion, and again, opposed to AM770 for a number of the reasons that have already been stated here. But there's a couple of different points I wanted to make about the underlying bill that we are talking about with, with Senator Strommen that I, I think I didn't quite get to yesterday. I talked yesterday on the mic about the unintended consequences that often occur when we try to push things through. And I understand that there are people in this body who maybe disagree with the will of the voters, and want to change certain things with regards to the ballot initiative that did approve, overwhelmingly, paid sick leave. But I think that even the bill, LB415, which is on the board as well, has some problems that perhaps some of my colleagues haven't even thought through yet. So, the ballot initiative did not contemplate exempting businesses of ten employees or under; that is added by LB415. And-- I'm sorry, by the amendment. And when you add the amendment that limits the number of employees that this exempts, or businesses that this exempts, it has the unintended consequence of actually having a fairly large impact on a number of people who work in the labor industry, building and trades, people who-- construction workers, to put it quite simply; people who are essential for the, the development of various buildings here in the state of Nebraska. And we've been talking with a number of individuals who that affects, various stakeholders who are in that

building and, and trade industry, essentially. And my understanding is that, without a fix, without a modification of some of the language that we would ultimately be passing if we amend LB415 with AM770 and AM771, is that we would have the unintended-- I'm assuming it's unintended-- consequence of essentially leaving upwards of 20,000 employees who do essential labor work in the state of Nebraska high and dry, without any kind of paid sick leave. And so, there are conversations that have been going on about ways that we can incorporate those folks, and to make sure that we're not leaving people on the outside who I, again, am going to assume were not intended to be cut out by this. And in my conversations with various stakeholders, I don't believe that the folks that are pushing this change or these changes intended to cut those people out. But we need to come up with a fix. And unfortunately, if passed, LB415 as amended by AM770 and AM771 will have the consequence of essentially saying to a large number of hard-working people in the state of Nebraska that you could be left without any kind of paid sick leave at all, and that's paid sick leave that they might currently be eligible for. So, I have concerns about that. There's the overarching goal that I think a lot of us have in this Legislature of supporting our working families and our working folks here in Nebraska. And if, in fact, we want to stay true to that goal, then we need to do that when we pass legislation that doesn't cut those people out. So, colleagues, I have a great concern about that, and I've talked to some of you off the mic about it already. But my hope is that we can take that into consideration when we vote. So, later today, you are going to have the opportunity to vote on both the amendment, which is Senator Strommen's bill, and the underlying LB415. The division of the question, which we've already talked about a little bit, provides you the opportunity to say that you don't support Senator Strommen's bill, which is AM770, but you maybe do support some of the clarifications in LB415. Or, you can say that you're against both of those if, in fact, you do want to leave the ballot initiative as the voters intended. And so, you have that option, colleagues, and I think that it's actually really nice that we allow people the chance to make their voice heard. Because what we're going to see here, when we do take a vote, is where you fall. And I think that we're going to see very clearly whether or not people are going to say that they support the voters and they support what the voters intention was with AM-- I'm sorry, with LB415 and AM770 being bills that walk that back. So, colleagues, you have an opportunity to tell the voters where you are today. And I encourage you to pay attention to the debate still. I think we're going to continue talking a little bit later today-- I know we're coming up on cloture relatively soon-- but continue to have this conversation. And

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if you have questions about who this bill does or doesn't include, or maybe what some of those unintended consequences are, please get involved in the debate. Ask those questions. Talk to Senator Ballard, talk to Senator Strommen; come find people off the mic to, to say "What impact does this truly have?" Because I really do believe that if we pass these bills without some of those fixes, it's going--

ARCH: Time, Senator.

DUNGAN: --to exclude those individuals. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

QUICK: Thank you, Mr. President. And I rise in support of LB415. I, I oppose AM770, and I'm supporting the motion to bracket. I was going to remind people of some of the things I talked about yesterday, because some of you weren't out here when, when I talked about that, and it had to do with the death penalty vote back in 2016. And when I was campaigning at that time and going door-to-door, voters would talk to me at the door, and they would tell-- ask me what my position is-- was on the death penalty. And of course, my position, personally, was I was against the death penalty. But I would-- but I told them that I would respect the will of the voters. And so, for people to say that the voters don't know what they're voting for, I would disagree with that, because the voters at the doors will actually talk to you about what-- what's happening in the, in the elections. One of the things we also learn-- I've learned a lot about is listening. And so, listening to your constituents, listening to each other here on the floor, and finding out what the different perspectives are. And when you're listening to your constituents, it's really important to make sure that, that we're actually hearing what they're telling us. Now, you have-- you might have constituents that will talk to you about-- they might be on opposite sides of the fence, so-- but, but to listen to both sides is truly important, and I think with what we've saw with what the voters did in the election means that there were more people for sick leave than there were against, and that's the same thing that I hear from constituents when I get emails or hear from them. I'm hearing more from, from people who are supporting the sick leave and wanting to have that as to those who are supp-- wanting, wanting to see it limited. I thought I'd also talk a little bit about that I-- one thing I talked about yesterday, that I was more or less a seasonal worker at one time. I used to work for a sand and gravel ready-mix operation who only operated during the spring, summer, and sometimes fall depending on the weather. And a lot of times, we'd get laid off maybe about between [INAUDIBLE]-- somewhere between November and

December, and we would be laid off until there was spring thaw. I was one of the fortunate ones who-- because you would collect unemployment insurance at that time; it really didn't pay the bills, so they would let me come in and work at least one day a week to earn some extra money. But, you know, that's one of the barriers for people. So, you have people who are seasonal workers; during the, the, the remainder of the year, they really have no sick leave to, to use for their time that they, they have to be away from, from work, whether it's for a sick child or whether they're sick, or they have a sick spouse. I know we've had people that I worked with-- even when I was at the power plant in Grand Island, we had a couple individuals who, who had cancer, and they would have to be gone for long periods of time. And that sick leave was really important for them otherwise, with the medical bills-- although we did have good insurance, you still had your deductibles to pay. And later on, we went to a high, high-deductible plan, which was sometimes pretty hard for employees to overcome those, those, those issues. And those just come down to some more barriers for families. So, as we're voting to maybe take sick leave away, I see some of the bills coming out of committees that will actually put barriers up for families who, who would be receiving SNAP benefits or TANF benefits, and I think we have to really be careful about what we're doing. Because not only are we saying you can't have sick leave, but now we're also going to say we're not-- we're going to limit the amount of, of SNAP benefits you get, or we're going to limit the amount of TANF benefits you receive for child care, or for rent and utility assistance and those type of issues. So, I would urge you all to please vote against AM770. I do support LB415; I think it's important. But I cannot support AM770. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

GUERECA: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. Good morning, Nebraskans watching from home and all over the state. I rise today in support of LB415, but in opposition to AM770. Not to continue to beat the same message, but I think it's an important one that, when our fellow Nebraskans casted their overwhelming vote, I think they did have in mind protecting a certain class of people that is being excluded, potentially unintentionally, by L-- AM770. There's been some comments made earlier that there may be an additional cost to the employer that will be passed on to the consumer. When doing an analysis of similar states that have implemented similar measures, there was a slight uptick in cost; that cost ended up being, on average, around 2.7 cents per worker per hour of additional cost to employers. I think when Nebraskans casted their vote, they wanted to make sure that the concrete worker working for a nine-person crew

doing backbreaking work every single day deserved a little earned time off to make sure that their health is good, that the health of their family is good. And I think if you ask our fellow Nebraskans if they're willing to absorb that extra 2.7 cents per worker per hour so a single mother working at a diner can make sure her kids go to get their checkups, I think what you'll hear from our fellow Nebraskans who love their community, who love their family, who work hard every single day-- will say yes. Because these hard-working-- our hard-working neighbors deserve that time off. Again, this is earned time off; this isn't a benevolent gift. It is earned. It is accrued. 30 hours for every one hour of paid sick leave to be used when you're sick, when your family is sick; to prevent a more serious injury, a more serious illness. This isn't "let's go on vacation." And what we've seen across the country is people respected that. On average, when analyzing states of similar size that implemented similar measures, folks didn't take their full allotment of five days because they understand that it is to be used for sick time. So, on average, we just saw an extra uptick of two days off-- two days off to make sure that their children were healthy, to make sure that their parents could get to their doctor's appointment, to make sure that they, themselves, were in the right state of mind to be able to work hard and to provide for their families a good life. I think that when our fellow Nebraskans voted for this, they voted with the spirit of, of, of making that-- of keeping that good life good. Like I said, my litmus test for this year is, when I look at a bill, "Does this better the good life?" Again, this measure-- to me, the paid sick leave, it's baseline for the good life. Giving you a couple extra hours to go to a doctor's appointment or to take care of yourself for one day isn't something tremendous. It's not going to be the great thing that drives people to this state, because God knows we need workers all across the state. But as been said earlier, this could actually impact our small business owners and put them at a competitive disadvantage against other companies. We need to keep that in mind, the unintended consequences of the actions that we take and the votes that we take in this body. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Hughes would like to recognize some special guests. There are 14 sixth through eighth grade students from Our Redeemer Lutheran School in Staplehurst, and they are located in the north balcony. Students, please rise-- oh, you are rise-- and be welcomed by your Legislature. Returning to the queue. Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak, and this is your third opportunity.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. And again, good morning, colleagues. Special shout-out to our friends from Staplehurst that are here today.

Even though I attended public school in Staplehurst, which is no longer open, that is a community that is near and dear to my heart, and I am happy to welcome those Seward County neighbors to their Nebraska Legislature. It's also a good reminder about, in addition to the policy, in addition to the legal, in addition to the practical, there's a lot-- everybody's familiar with the old saying that all politics is, is personal. And, as many of you know, we have been dealing with an unexpected health issue at our house over the past week, and my husband's been home recovering from an unexpected surgery. And one of the discussions that my nine-year-old and I had over the last day or two, he was worried that, that dad wasn't going to get paid while he was home recovering. And I explained, number one, dad owns a small business, and so he will get paid; number two, as a small business owner, he provides good benefits to those who work for him and thus would be unimpacted by this law. And it-- and I explained the connection to the debate and the dialogue that we were having in the Legislature this week on this very topic, and how some senators were using their power to not only undermine the will of the people, but to make sure that other workers who face an unexpected health issue wouldn't get paid if they work in ag, or small businesses, or their age is wrong. And my nine-year-old said, "That's awful. How can that happen?" A nine-year-old understands what apparently many elected representatives don't. In talking about this very debate with some very astute conservative political observers and thought leaders in Nebraska recently, they said, Danielle, how is this happening in our Nebraska Legislature? How did our once-proud institution become so uncaring and unthinking about not only respecting the will of the people, but finding the right balance for everyday working people? Maybe term limits has something to do with it, but I guess each senator's going to have to answer for themselves how they're contributing to the evisceration of the people's work with their voice and with their votes. I also think it's very telling, and, you know, I am such an optimistic, kind-hearted person by nature, so it's always really helpful when people remind me who they are, because sometimes, I forget. Senator Strommen will jump on the mic and talk about an informal poll of some lobby group, and that drives his vote. But 70% of the voters actually vote in an election? Meh. Could care less. Thank you for reminding me, Senator Strommen. I really appreciate that, and I hope that you talk more on this measure and others so that your motives are clear, because they are; they're crystal clear. And it's good that you're candid and honest about that, and I will make those connections. So, this is where the Legislature is headed today. In a few minutes, we'll have a cloture vote on this needless, hateful, harmful measure. And it shows that this body is fine eviscerating

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safety net, cutting back the will of the voters, attacking working families; will nickel-and-dime them to death with more taxes this session, and will eviscerate the safety net, and will undermine minimum wage and sick leave. That's the legacy that you want for the 2025 legislative session? Do you feel good when you go home at night? When you tell your constituents that's what you're doing here? Because that's what you are doing here. And if you don't have the courage of your convictions to speak and to vote and be honest with your constituents and your colleagues, ask yourself why not. Why aren't you in the queue--

ARCH: Time, Speaker [SIC].

CONRAD: --talking about your part in--

ARCH: Time, Senator.

CONRAD: --this process?

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

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. President. OK, listen to me. I'm going to talk about real math. This is what's so annoying about this conversation, and what is so literally annoying about the opposition. People coming up here and saying, "I've been a business owner for 30 years," "I've been a business owner for 20 years." If we-- "if this goes into effect, we are going to have to forgo pay raises for our workers to pay for this paid leave." No, I've seen how some of you live. I see the watch you have, I see the belt you wear. I've worked in fashion for 20 years; I know what I'm looking at. I've seen the car you drive, I've seen the lake houses you have. I've seen, you know, the four-car garage you have. So, let's talk about what you're really saying here. Am I asking you to forgo your lifestyle that, yes, you have earned? No. I also like nice things. I would love to someday have a lake house. I also want an Hermes belt. I also want an IWC watch, this and that. I'm an entrepreneur too, because I like nice things and I want to be in control of my earning and my money, just like you. But let's talk about the actual math that we're talking about. Under this law that the people passed, workers earn one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked. So, if we're talking about a grocery store, a liquor store, an, an instrument store in Columbus, what are your workers earning? Are they earning \$15 an hour? Are they earning \$18? \$20? Are they earning \$30 an hour? Let's be generous to you, Rolex-wearing man, and say your workers are earning \$30 an hour, which we know they're not. And I-- hmm. Those workers would have to work 30

hours to earn one hour of paid sick leave. So, let's say they earn \$30 an hour, work 30 hours to earn \$30 off, and you're walking around with your Rolex watch and your expensive Porsche, with your lake house, saying that if you have a worker who works 30 hours, you can't give them \$30? I'll walk up to you right now and you'll give me \$30 if I ask for it. I know that's right. If I said, will you take me to lunch? Will you get me some drinks? Man, I drink two drinks, that's \$30 if you go to the wrong cocktail bar. So, the, the "boo-boo, boo-hoo-hoo, I'm so sad, I'm going to go out of business"-- be serious. There are real small businesses, like mine, like many of yours as well, that are competing with large corporations that get massive tax breaks, they get massive discounts on benefits. The current system is already favoring big business, and this amendment just does more of that. So, all of you small business owners-- grocery store, liquor store, instrument store, whatever else you do-- why do you have more solidarity with businesses like, I mean, Google, Union Pacific, Mutual of Omaha, First National Bank, whatever big business we can talk about-- I'm mentioning some, some local businesses, but of course, there's way more. Why do you have more solidarity with them than the people who are working at your shop so that you can have a Rolex and a Porsche and a lake house? And then, you, you come in here, into our Legislature, the people's Legislature who sent you here, and you say, "Ah, if you work 30 hours, I can't afford to give you one hour of pay so you can take sick leave." What is that to you? \$15? \$20? You don't use payroll software? I was joking last night with Senator Conrad, what this bill really is, is a giveaway to payroll software companies. I use payroll software that tracks my employees' hours, it pays out their benefits, it, it keeps track of how many hours they've earned. It's going to keep software companies like that in business, I'll tell you that. And if any of you need help with your payroll, if you need to borrow \$30 from me so that your, your employee can have an hour off of work-- if that's the issue, come and talk to me. But your opposition and your arguments fall flat because what we're really talking about is something so modest, so basic, not excessive; one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked. What's that to you, \$15? Thank you, Mr. President.

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

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. I think we have about 14 minutes left in debate. So, I'm new to Appropriations this year, and one of the things that I've been discussing with my colleagues on the committee is what are our priorities as a state? The budget is a moral document, and it speaks to the people of Nebraska as to what our priorities are in this state. And the legislation to do-- to support

or undo what the people of Nebraska have voted for also speaks to our priorities as a state. We talk about workforce shortages, we talk about unemployment, we talk about poor people being lazy, we can't have-- we can't increase eligibility to SNAP or TANF or housing or childcare subsidies because poor people are lazy, and those same poor people who are lazy don't deserve to have five days--

CONRAD: That they earn.

M. CAVANAUGH: --that they earn off from work. And I've thought about this a lot, I have really listened to the debate, I have heard the, the, the potential compromises on AM770, and here's where I'm at. I can't compromise for some when I know that others are still going to lose, when the people have spoken. The people have told us that they support paid sick leave. Period, full stop. And if they didn't, they wouldn't have voted for it as-is. They would have gone to their legislators and said "I didn't vote for that because I didn't think it was the right fix. I'd like to see you. I voted for you, and I'm sending you there to do the right fix." But that's not what happened. They voted for it as-is. And now, we're going to have bills. We have a bill prioritized by Senator Rountree, a bill prioritized by Senator John Cavanaugh that is Senator Quick's bill, a bill prioritized by me, a bill that was Senator Spivey's that got IPPed in committee because-- I don't even understand why, still, to this day. I think that people didn't like attitudes. The most consequential thing we could have possibly done for low-income families in the state of Nebraska, and it got IPPed in committee, and the same people are going to stand here, and they're going to vote for this to harm low-income people. And you're not going to vote for SNAP, and you're not going to vote for SNAP for convicted drug felons, and you're not going to vote for increased TANFs, and you're not going to vote for increased child care subsidies. You're going to vote with the governor on cutting housing, but you also are going to vote to take those exact same people who don't own property-- their money, their income taxes-- and you're going to vote to put it towards property tax relief instead of services that are essential to the state of Nebraska. Nebraska. That's your moral compass right now. You have people who have private jets that are flying in to make votes that harm you, that harm you, that go against the will of the people. And you're going to see 33 to 34 votes on this. And mark my word, Nebraska, you sent them here. So, look at that board today and reflect. Does this represent you? I don't think it does. So, maybe get involved, get out of your seats, get to the polls. You got an election in Omaha and Lincoln the coming weeks. Do something. Be heard. Don't allow these people to tell you that your voice doesn't matter. Your voice only doesn't matter if you sit down

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and shut up. But if you stand up and you say no to my colleagues, your voice will matter. So, make it matter. Show up. Bother them. Be out in the rotunda, be at their offices, call their phones, email them. Tell them no. You did it at the ballot box, now do it here in the Chamber. Show up, Nebraska.

ARCH: Time, Senator.

M. CAVANAUGH: You deserve better.

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

SPIVEY: Thank you, Mr. President, and I yield in my time to Senator Hunt.

ARCH: Senator Hunt, you're recognized for 4 minutes, 50.

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Senator Spivey. It was probably a mistake for people to stand up and talk so much about the virtues of paid leave as a concept, and I think that it-- there's an easy tendency, or is it-- there's an obvious inclination to do that because so many of us ran on, you know, more benefits for Nebraska workers, higher quality of life, live the good life, blah, blah, blah. So, it's easier to stand up because it's sort of a natural mode that some of us go into when we just talk about the humanity and the value of the policy that helps workers, period. Whatever it is. And-- but I, but I think it was probably a mistake to spend so much time in this debate talking about the virtues of the policy and the righteous indignation and all of that because it's not necessarily that deep. What we're literally doing with this policy is not that deep, and I think folks really don't understand the math to it. And that's probably what we need to drill deeper into rather than just the, you know, kind of the big picture virtues of the policy, which we can have, you know, principled disagreements about. But look at the math, colleagues. Actually, before I get back into that, I've got other math to talk about. Here, I've got a list-- and it's not finished because I've been sitting here working on it myself-- but we can see it on this list-- and I should distribute this-- all of the senators by district and what your district voted for paid leave, how much it, it won by-- which, reminder, as has been said ad nauseum-- every single one of our districts passed paid leave-- compared to how many votes you got. I'll tell you, I won by an actual landslide in my district, probably the bluest district in Nebraska. And I'm a registered independent, of course; I'm a nonpartisan. But I won by an actual landslide against a serious opponent who, who took the race very

seriously. And I didn't get as many votes as paid sick leave did in my district. I think I got 70% of the vote, and paid sick leave passed in my district by 85%. I'm going to mention some other people. Hallstrom, passed by 71%; you got elected with 51%. Our Brad von Gillern, passed with 73%; you got elected by 52%. Speaker Arch, passed by nearly 80%; you won with 62%. Glen Meyer, 75%; you won by 60-- by 52%. 52% to 75%. So, let's put it in that ratio form. First, I'm going to say the number that the paid leave ballot initiative won by, and then I'll say what you won by. Christy Armendariz, a little over 79% versus 56%. Beau Ballard, over 76% versus 55%. Mind you, many of these people are incumbents; we should be talking about huge advantages here. And many of these are red districts. These are, like, very reliably conservative districts, and look at what paid leave is passing by. Jared Storm, 69%-54%; Jana Hughes, 63%-55%; Bosn, 72%-53%; Raybould, 83%-66%; Kauth, 75%-54%; Holdcroft, 75%-56%; Sorrentino, 71%-52%; McKeon, 63%-52%; Sanders, 82% to 52%; Hardin, 75% in that red, red district, to 52%. Andersen, nearly 79%-52%. Also, I didn't realize how close some of y'all's races were. Like, it's by the grace of God we got 17 on anything in the first place, but gosh, some of these races were really close. The point is more people wanted paid leave than wanted us here, me included. And I'm like the most popular person in Nebraska, everybody knows that. But it was a mistake for us to just talk about the value of the policy, because the math isn't there. We're talking about one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked. That's it. That's not radical, that's not excessive. If something like that is going to put your business out of business, maybe look at how you're living. It would take a worker nearly an entire month of full-time work just to earn a single paid day off. So, let's stop pretending that this is a sweeping entitlement. It's not; it's the bare minimum. And the idea that we can't even offer that--

ARCH: Time, Senator.

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. President.

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

McKINNEY: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Hunt, you want my time? All right. I yield my time to Senator Hunt.

ARCH: Senator Hunt, 4 minutes, 50.

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The idea that we can't even offer one day off per month, paid-- and once again, what, what kind of pay are we talking here? Is it \$15? Is it \$30? Is it \$20 an hour? It's out of

touch with what workers are living through. We always say that we want to attract workers to Nebraska, we want to retain talent, we want people to stay. Well, guess what? People don't stay in places that treat them like they're disposable. People stay in communities that care about them. And folks have made the point-- well, workers-- or, or our businesses can already do this, businesses can already do this. Well, what we've seen is that businesses don't do this. I've heard business owners in this body stand up and talk with offensive disdain about their own workers, talking about the government tells me how much I have to pay my workers, and now the government wants to tell me that I have to give them a day off, unearned. I, I would like to send your employees a transcript of that speech that you gave, because when we talk about attracting and retaining workers, I don't know how you're attracting workers with that kind of attitude. We take people for granted in this state. And if you want to talk about what's really unfair, let's talk about how small businesses are competing with large corporations for discounts on benefits, for tax breaks, for politicians that have a whole lobby out there, employed-- businesses that have a whole lobby employed to talk to politicians like us, grease us up with checks, grease us up with free drinks, free lunch so that we come up here and say on the mic that we're not going to be able to give employees raises anymore if we have to give them one hour off for every 30 hours worked. Someone working full-time, 40 hours a week, taking almost a month to earn a single day off. This is not radical. It's a minimal safeguard, and it's not even front-loaded, it's not even retroactive; it would be earned over time, and it asks the bare minimum of employers, and it provides the bare minimum to workers. It's the definition of reasonable. And another thing is, a lot of workers already assume this is the standard. They assume that if someone gets the flu, or if their kid has a fever, that they are working for somebody who would want them to stay home without losing pay. But for hundreds of thousands of workers in Nebraska, for most workers in Nebraska, that's not the case. They've had to show up sick, they've had to send their sick kids to school, they've had to choose between their health and their rent check while my colleagues have the Rolex on, have the lake house, have the Porsche, have the wife with the \$2,000 bag that I saw at the fundraiser. Once again, colleagues, I've been in fashion for 20 years, and I know what I'm looking at. Maybe it was second-hand. I've got-- I mean, I've got nice stuff too. I've been roasted for that. But I'm not the one standing up here saying I'm not going to give my hourly employees a raise if I have to give them an hour off for every 30 hours worked. I have nice things because I can afford it, and pay my workers well, and treat my workers well. If that's a problem for you, why don't you think about your own

conservative principles and put those in practice, and stop living outside your means? This amendment waters down a policy that is already incredibly modest. And I want to be crystal clear: if you're arguing that even this one hour for every 30 hours is too generous, then you are not standing up for workers, you're not standing with families, you're not working to build the Nebraska you claim to care about to attract and retain talent, and you're not honoring the will of your own voters who wanted this policy more than they wanted you here. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Mr. Clerk, for a motion.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Ballard would move to invoke cloture pursuant to Rule 7, Section 10.

ARCH: Senator Ballard, for what purpose do you rise?

BALLARD: Can I get a call of the house and a roll-call vote in regular order?

ARCH: There has been a request to place the house under call. The question is, shall the house go under call? All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 28 ayes, 1 nay to place the house under call.

ARCH: The house is under call. Senators, please record your presence. Those unexcused senators outside the Chamber, please return to the Chamber and record your presence. All unauthorized personnel, please leave the floor. The house is under call. Senators DeKay, Hardin, Jacobson, Kauth, Ibach, Bosn, von Gillern, please return to the Chamber. The house is under call. Senators DeKay, Hardin, Kauth, Ibach, Bosn, von Gillern, please return to the Chamber. The house is under call. Senators DeKay, Hardin, Ibach, Bosn, von Gillern, please return to the Chamber. The house is under call. Senators Ibach and Hardin, please return to the Chamber. The house is under call. All unexcused members are now present. Mr. Clerk, please call the roll.

CLERK: Senator Andersen voting yes. Senator Arch voting yes. Senator Armendariz voting yes. Senator Ballard voting yes. Senator Bosn voting yes. Senator Bostar voting no. Senator Brandt voting yes. Senator John Cavanaugh voting no. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh voting no. Senator Clements voting yes. Senator Clouse voting yes. Senator Conrad voting no. Senator DeBoer voting no. Senator DeKay voting yes. Senator Dorn voting yes. Senator Dover voting yes. Senator Dungan voting no. Senator Fredrickson voting no. Senator Guereca voting no. Senator

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Hallstrom voting yes. Senator Hansen voting yes. Senator Hardin voting yes. Senator Holdcroft voting yes. Senator Hughes voting yes. Senator Hunt voting no. Senator Ibach voting yes. Senator Jacobson voting yes. Senator Juarez voting no. Senator Kauth voting yes. Senator Lippincott voting yes. Senator Lonowski voting yes. Senator McKeon voting yes. Senator McKinney voting no. Senator Meyer voting yes. Senator Moser voting yes. Senator Murman voting yes. Senator Prokop voting no. Senator Quick voting no. Senator Raybould voting yes. Senator Riepe voting yes. Senator Rountree voting no. Senator Sanders voting yes. Senator Sorrentino voting yes. Senator Spivey voting no. Senator Storer voting yes. Senator Storm voting yes. Senator Strommen voting yes. Senator von Gillern voting yes. Senator Wordekemper voting yes. Vote is 43 [SIC-- 34] ayes, 15 nays to invoke cloture, Mr. President.

ARCH: The cloture motion is successful. The next vote before the body is the bracket motion, MO111. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. There has been a request for a roll-call vote. Mr. Clerk, please call the roll.

CLERK: Senator Andersen voting no. Senator Arch voting no. Senator Armendariz voting no. Senator Ballard voting no. Senator Bosn voting no. Senator Bostar voting yes. Senator Brandt voting no. Senator John Cavanaugh voting yes. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh voting yes. Senator Clements voting no. Senator Clouse voting no. Senator Conrad voting yes. Senator DeBoer voting yes. Senator DeKay voting no. Senator Dorn voting no. Senator Dover voting no. Senator Dungan voting yes. Senator Fredrickson voting yes. Senator Guereca voting yes. Senator Hallstrom voting no. Senator Hansen voting no. Senator Hardin voting no. Senator Holdcroft voting no. Senator Hughes voting no. Senator Hunt voting yes. Senator Ibach voting no. Senator Jacobson voting no. Senator Juarez voting yes. Senator Kauth voting no. Senator Lippincott voting no. Senator Lonowski voting no. Senator McKeon voting no. Senator McKinney voting yes. Senator Meyer voting no. Senator Moser voting no. Senator Murman voting no. Senator Prokop voting yes. Senator Quick voting yes. Senator Raybould voting no. Senator Riepe voting no. Senator Rountree voting yes. Senator Sanders voting no. Senator Sorrentino voting no. Senator Spivey voting yes. Senator Storer voting no. Senator Storm voting no. Senator Strommen voting no. Senator von Gillern voting no. Senator Wordekemper voting no. Vote is 15 ayes, 34 nays on the motion to bracket, Mr. President.

ARCH: The motion is not successful. The next vote is AM545. There's been a request for a roll call in reverse order. Mr. Clerk, please call the roll.

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CLERK: Senator Wordekemper voting yes. Senator von Gillern voting yes. Senator Strommen voting yes. Senator Storm voting yes. Senator Storer voting yes. Senator Spivey voting no. Senator Sorrentino voting yes. Senator Sanders voting yes. Senator Rountree voting no. Senator Riepe voting yes. Senator Raybould voting yes. Senator Quick voting no. Senator Prokop voting no. Senator Murman voting yes. Senator Moser voting yes. Senator Meyer voting yes. Senator McKinney voting no. Senator McKeon voting yes. Senator Lonowski voting yes. Senator Lippincott voting yes. Senator Kauth voting yes. Senator Juarez voting no. Senator Jacobson voting yes. Senator Ibach voting yes. Senator Hunt voting no. Senator Hughes voting yes. Senator Holdcroft voting yes. Senator Hardin voting yes. Senator Hansen voting yes. Senator Hallstrom voting yes. Senator Guereca voting no. Senator Fredrickson voting no. Senator Dungan voting no. Senator Dover voting yes. Senator Dorn voting yes. Senator DeKay voting yes. Senator DeBoer voting no. Senator Conrad voting no. Senator Clouse voting yes. Senator Clements voting yes. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh voting no. Senator John Cavanaugh voting no. Senator Brandt voting yes. Senator Bostar voting no. Senator Bosn voting yes. Senator Ballard voting yes. Senator Armendariz voting yes. Senator Arch voting yes. Senator Andersen voting yes. Vote is 34 ayes, 15 nays, Mr. President, on the committee amendment.

ARCH: The amendment is adopted. Next vote, LB415. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed-- there's been a request for a roll call. Mr. Clerk, please call the roll.

CLERK: Senator Andersen voting yes. Senator Arch voting yes. Senator Armendariz voting yes. Senator Ballard voting yes. Senator Bosn voting yes. Senator Bostar voting no. Senator Brandt voting yes. Senator John Cavanaugh voting no. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh voting no. Senator Clements voting yes. Senator Clouse voting yes. Senator Conrad voting no. Senator DeBoer voting no. Senator DeKay voting yes. Senator Dorn voting yes. Senator Dover voting yes. Senator Dungan voting no. Senator Fredrickson not voting. Senator Guereca voting no. Senator Hallstrom voting yes. Senator Hansen voting yes. Senator Hardin voting yes. Senator Holdcroft voting yes. Senator Hughes voting yes. Senator Hunt voting no. Senator Ibach voting yes. Senator Jacobson voting yes. Senator Juarez voting no. Senator Kauth voting yes. Senator Lippincott voting yes. Senator Lonowski voting yes. Senator McKeon voting yes. Senator McKinney voting no. Senator Meyer voting yes. Senator Moser voting yes. Senator Murman voting yes. Senator Prokop voting no. Senator Quick voting no. Senator Raybould voting yes. Senator Riepe voting yes. Senator Rountree voting no. Senator Sanders voting yes. Senator Sorrentino voting yes. Senator Spivey voting no. Senator

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Storer voting yes. Senator Storm voting yes. Senator Strommen voting yes. Senator von Gillern voting yes. Senator Wordekemper voting yes. Vote is 34 ayes, 14 nays, Mr. President, to advance the bill.

ARCH: LB415 advances to E&R Initial. I raise the call. Mr. Clerk, for items.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. Some items for the record. New A bill: LB117A introduced by Senator Clouse. It's a bill for an act relating to appropriations; appropriates funds to aid in the carrying out of the provisions of LB177. Additionally, amendment to be printed from Senator Bostar to LB380. That's all I have at this time, Mr. President.

ARCH: Mr. Clerk, you may proceed to the next item on the agenda.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item: Select File, LB22A. I have no E&R amendments. Senator Dungan would move to amend with AM780.

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

DUNGAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Colleagues, this is the A bill that is attached to my at-home nurse visiting bill that has already passed and is on-- or, passed through Select and is currently sitting on Final Reading; the A bill needs to catch up with it. Slight amendment here with AM780 that has to do with the calculations as it pertains to the federal versus state matching. None of this has a General Fund impact; it is coming out of the Medicaid Excess Profit Fund [SIC]. Still, we've worked incredibly hard with all the stakeholders in the Department of Health and Human Services to bring the cost of this down considerably. I think the original fiscal note had the state portion of this being a couple million dollars; we've gotten it down to under a million, it's just a few hundred thousand dollars. So, the changes in the AM have to do with the calculation of who all is included in the population that it affects. It's hard to tell how many individuals that this affects. It's going to be the 90/10 match versus the 54/46 match that pertains to other populations. I believe, based on my conversations with a number of stakeholders involved, that overall, I think that this fiscal note on the cash fund impact is probably even inflated a little bit, but it's better to be safe than sorry. And so, that's where this appropriation comes from. It's also assuming maximum usage, which will not happen for a number of years. But, at the end of the day, colleagues, LB22 seeks to continue to achieve the goal which I have worked towards now for multiple years, to ensure that we have healthy moms and healthy babies, and continue to help our families

here in Nebraska with that maternal care, both in a pre-natal capacity and now, with LB22, ensuring that there is at-home nurse visiting to address various issues that may come up in that just very narrow window of six months postpartum care. So, with that, I would encourage your green vote on AM780 and ultimately LB22A so this can catch up with the bill for Final Reading. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

SPIVEY: Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you, Senator Dungan, for bringing this bill and talking through the amendment. I rise in support of the amendment and LB22, and just wanted to add some color to why this is so important. I think, you know, we have seen-- and, and I work in the space of maternal and child health every day-- that within the first year of life after that baby is born, we see the most maternal deaths and infant deaths. And so, being able to have postpartum support is integrally important, especially as you think about access to mental health support services or child care. Can I get a gavel, Mr. President? Mr. President? Can I have a gavel, please? [GAVEL] Thank you. It's a little hard to hear yourself in here, sometimes. And I think, you know, this body has said how important women and children are, and so this bill does that, and so I think it deserves some attention around what's happening. And so, again, I, I think as we have major decisions and priorities in front of the body around cuts, what we are prioritizing, prioritizing the health of people with the capacity for pregnancy, our parents and our children are going to make the difference in our workforce, in how we grow our economy, the vibrancy of our communities. And so, I just wanted to provide some color, again, around what we are seeing in the field around the amount of maternal and infant deaths in that first year of life, and how having a home visiting program will allow for more access and support. Some folks don't realize this, but over 80% of our districts or our counties across the state are maternal care deserts, so that means there is not access to care, again, for that parent as they're navigating-- whether it's pediatric care, care for themselves-- and we are now seeing an increase in primary care deserts, too. And so, I rise in support of LB22 and the amendment, AM780. I appreciate Senator Dungan working on the fiscal note, and I also think millions of dollars investing in moms and babies and parents and healthy families is actually a, a great investment. So, even though that there is a change in the number of-- in the dollar amount of the investment, I think that we have to continue, as a body, to think about how we support those that we say that we care about. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

HANSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was hoping Senator Dungan to yield to a question, please.

ARCH: Senator Dungan, will you yield?

DUNGAN: Yes.

HANSEN: I just want to get some clarification about the-- with the added amendment on LB22A. And, as you probably well know, the amount of programs that have been introduced this year, and bills trying to use Medicare-- Medicaid-- Medicare excess fund-- and I know that's what this is using as well. But just to kind of clarify, if the FMAP or the federal government then decides to not fund as much towards programs such as this, and we're not going to be on the hook for general funds, I just hope you can clarify that no general funds will be used for this program, or for the A bill.

DUNGAN: That is correct. So, I brought an amendment on Select File for the underlying bill-- just to remind everybody, this is an A bill-- but I did bring an amendment to the underlying bill on Select File that clarified, pursuant to a conversation I had with Senator Clements, that in the event that the Medicaid Excess Profit Fund was depleted, no funds would ever come from general funds to pay for this program. So, that is correct. I don't have any concerns about that fund being depleted anytime in the near future. This is about a \$700,000 state appropriation out of that cash fund. There's about \$40 million, I think, in that cash fund, but in the event that it ever was depleted, correct. There is an amendment on LB22 that now has been adopted that clarifies it will never touch general funds.

HANSEN: OK. Thank you for your clearing that up. Appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

KAUTH: Thank you, Mr. President. And Senator Dungan-- I did not give him notice. I just had a question pop into my head. Can I ask him a question?

ARCH: Senator Dungan, will you yield?

DUNGAN: Yes.

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KAUTH: Thank you, Senator Dungan. Does this type of care apply to only babies? So, so women who have actually had babies? Or, is this also for abor-- pre-abortion care, or care after an abortion?

DUNGAN: Nope, this is just for postpartum care. So, once, once somebody gives birth, the Family Connects program, which is what this contemplates being utilized as postpartum care, ultimately would apply to that mom and that baby to provide that, as I think it's defined in the bill, like, head-to-toe nursing services. But we did adopt an amendment specifically on Select File as well that defines what this postpartum care looks like. So, it is only for people who have given birth.

KAUTH: For women who've given birth. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue. Senator Guereca, for a motion. Oh. Excuse me. Colleagues, the question before the body is the adoption of AM780 to LB22A. 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: AM780 is adopted. Senator Guereca, for a motion.

GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that LB22A advance to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor say aye. Opposed, nay. LB22A does advance. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB148A. I have nothing on the bill, Senator.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that LB148A be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor say aye. Opposed, nay. LB148A does advance. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, Select File, LB41A. I have nothing on the bill, Senator.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

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GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that LB41A be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. LB41A does advance. I would like to take the opportunity to introduce some special guests in the balcony. They are 60 fourth grade students from St. Columbkille Catholic School in Papillion, and they are located in the north balcony. Students, please rise and be welcomed by your Legislature. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, pursuant to the agenda, LB529. Senator, first of all, there are E&R amendments.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that the E&R amendments to LB529 be adopted.

ARCH: Colleagues, you heard the motion. All those in favor say aye. Opposed, nay. E&R amendments are adopted.

CLERK: I have nothing further on the bill, Senator.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

GUERECA: Mr. President, I'd move that LB529 be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. LB529 does advance. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, legislative bill-- Select File, LB457. Senator, I have nothing on the bill.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that LB457 be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. LB457 advances. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next bill: Select File, LB84. I have nothing on the bill, Senator.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

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GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that LB8-- LB84 be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, all those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. LB84 does advance. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, Select File, LB355. I have nothing on the bill, Senator.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that LB355 be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, all those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. LB355 does advanced. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, Select File, LB97. First of all, Senator, there are E&R amendments.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that the E&R amendments to LB97 be adopted.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. The E&R amendments are adopted.

CLERK: Senator, I have nothing further on the bill.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, for a motion.

GUERECA: Mr. President, I move that LB97 be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. LB97 does advance. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, consistent with the agenda, LB390, Select File. There are no E&R amendments. Senator Murman would move to amend with AM653.

ARCH: Senator Murman, you're recognized to open on your amendment.

MURMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. AM653 is a quick fix brought, brought to my attention from a constituent reaching out meaning to clarify the bill. In some instances, a school may not have their own library, but

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has partnered with the local library. AM653 clarifies that LB390 only affects school libraries on school grounds, not traditional public libraries, even if they are contracted or partnered with a school. Thank you, and I ask for your green vote on both AM653 and LB390.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue. Senator Murman, you're recognized to close on your amendment. Senator Murman waives close. Colleagues, the question before the body is the adoption of AM653. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 30 ayes, 2 nays on the adoption of the amendment, Mr. President.

ARCH: AM653 is adopted.

CLERK: I have nothing further on the bill, Senator.

ARCH: Senator Ballard, for a motion.

BALLARD: Mr. President, I move that LB3-- LB390 be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. LB390 does advance. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, Select File, LB135. There are no E&R amendments. Senator Holdcroft would move to amend with AM779.

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

HOLDCROFT: Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you again for the opportunity to discuss LB135. As a refresher, LB135 is the reintroduction of a similar bill I brought last year, which was LB878, and was advanced by the Education Committee to the General File during the 2024 session but was not able to advance due to the limited time in the short session. The goal of this bill is to maximize voter turnout for a school or educational service unit bond elections. Voter turnout is many times statistically lower for special elections. I attribute this to such things as lack of voter education about the measure, and the normal business of life, and voter apathy. School districts in Nebraska rely heavily on special mail-in elections. In 2023, two schools in my district-- Papillion-La Vista School District and Millard School District-- utilized a special election process. 13 days after the most recent general election, the Millard Public School voted unanimously to put a bond question to a vote, to the people, through a special mail-in election that occurred on February 11, 2025.

We found out this morning that the voter turnout for that event was 29%. We had 78% voter turnout for the general election just three months ago, but for this special election, we had 29%. 29% of the people making a decision on a bond that is at \$150 million-- 58. \$158 million. Also, Bennington, the element-- Bennington School District held a special election on, on March 11; it's \$112 million bond, and they had a 49% turnout. Again, we had 78% voter turnout in November, and now we're holding special elections just three months later, and we're getting turnouts that are less than 50%. I can't help but ask why couldn't they have proposed this sooner, so that it could have been put to a vote-- then we're talking about the Millard Public Schools-- put to a vote in the general election. LB135 proposes that schools and educational service units seeking voter approval for the issuance of bonds and exceeding levy limits only to do so in conjunction with a statewide primary or general election in an even-numbered year, or in conjunction with traditionally recognized election dates in odd-numbered years, both in the spring and the fall. So-- I'll get into the details here with the amendment. When it comes to electing those who govern us, we strive to engage voters and encourage them to make their voices heard. Given the escalation in property valuations and the taxes we pay to those parcels-- on those parcels, I think it's equally important to engage as many voters as possible on issues such as bonding and levy overrides because they, too, impact the property taxes we pay. As LB135 stands now on Select File, there are two opportunities every year, even and odd, that schools and educational services units may hold bond issue elections. It doesn't matter if it is an urban or rural school. In the even years, they would be held in conjunction with the primary and general elections, but in the odd years, first, they can be used in conjunction-- they can be done in conjunction with a regularly-scheduled general election of a political subdivision. So, first of all, the opportunity is there, for instance, to piggyback on the Omaha mayoral election and do the bond election in conjunction with that, or any other political entity regularly-scheduled election. Also, in the odd years, they-- we have fixed dates: the first Tuesday after the second Monday in May, or, also in the odd years, on the first Tuesday or the first Monday in November. So, every six months, there is an opportunity for a school bond election. AM779-- finally, we get to the amendment-- removes the ten-month waiting period after a failed bond issue election, which is in Section 6, page 11, lines 16 to 18. This eliminates the, the need for the previous AM477. AM477 actually exempted the fastest-growing districts from that cooling-off period, that delay period between special elections; this amendment eliminates it completely. So, there's-- any, any bond that fails can be

reconsidered within six months of the regularly-scheduled dates. There is no fiscal note associated with this bill. Thank you once again to Chairwoman Sanders and members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs for advancing LB135, and to those of you who voted it to Select File. Colleagues, I would appreciate your green vote on LB135 and AM779. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator von Gillern, you're recognized to speak.

von GILLERN: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in gentle opposition to LB135. And there are parts of this bill that I, that I do like, and I like what Senator Holdcroft is, is doing here in some respects in that it, it does encourage school districts to work within the parameters of the voter, the elections that already exist, which saves money. And, and my, my opposition is 100% from a fiscal standpoint. So, so that's being fiscally responsible, to work those ballot initiatives into existing elections, and, and I believe that that part is-- it is a wise part of the bill, and something that I do support. But I also believe-- and I-- I don't believe; I know that there are unintended consequences to the bill, and that is with regard, again, to the fiscal impact. I do like elements of the bill, as I said. It prevents school districts from holding special elections simply to achieve a desired outcome. If bonds have to compete with one another, if there's a general election or primary election and there's multiple bonds on that ballot, I think it gives voters a view of the whole of the decision that they are making. If we're voting on streets and schools and a fire truck and all kinds of different things, voters are more likely to look at that and say-- and take it in a, in a broader picture, look at it a little bit more holistically. Again, my primary opposition comes from the fact-- and I do say "fact"-- that school districts and taxpayers will pay more for their projects if the projects only come to the marketplace twice a year. In my 32 years in the Omaha construction industry at our firm, there was not one day that went by that we were not working on or in a school in the metro area, or in a 100- or 150-mile radius of Omaha, so I know what it is that I speak. One of my favorite conversation-starters in, in Omaha is to ask people what school that they went to, because typically we've either worked on-- built the building or worked on it at some point. So, schools were our thing for many years, and the reality is that it boils down to supply and demand with the contracting community, the see-- the suppliers, the subcontractors, the workers. And if numerous projects come out at the same time, it creates challenges for the design industry, again, for the contractors and the subcontractors, and all of that flows into what I learned in my first three weeks of Econ 101, which was about supply and demand. And if there's limited

supply than demand, then the prices will increase. When OPS passed their large, large bond issues some 18 years ago, there was high competition in the construction market for the early work that came out, but the later projects, not so much. Contractors filled up on work early, they-- the subcontract market filled up, and therefore, they-- folks were not able to pursue stuff later in the, in the bidding cycle because they had already filled their plates. So, what was the result of that? The result was higher prices. The subcontractors raised their prices to the contractors, the contractors raised their fees, because everyone knew it was going to be harder to get the work done because there was a limited supply of all of those things, and a lack of workforce. So, again, it's simply a supply-and-demand matter. If all the school districts come out with their projects at the same time, then all the projects will bid around the same time, and I don't believe that that will reflect the best value for the districts or for the taxpayers. I do like the concept, as I mentioned, of restricting when and how elections may occur. I, I do find it frustrating that districts don't have, in some cases, greater foresight to say we have a-- we have a need coming and we need to resolve that need, so therefore that generates a project, and we get designers on board. I mean, the reality is that land is purchased years ahead of time, designers are brought on board years ahead of time in order to begin to quantify these things. So, again, I think, I think that, that much-- many of the projects could be worked in within the parameters of what Senator Holdcroft has in his LB135. I see I'm getting close to my time. I'm going to stop there, and then I'll finish up here in just a little bit when I get back on the mic. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

BRANDT: Thank you, Mr. President. Would Senator Holdcroft be able to answer a question?

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

HOLDCROFT: Yes.

BRANDT: So, Senator Holdcroft, this amendment takes out the language that would restrict an immediate election-- basically, what you're saying is a-- any school can have another election in six months. Is that correct?

HOLDCROFT: Yes. If, if the bond fails--

BRANDT: Right.

HOLDCROFT: Currently, in the bill, it is-- you have to wait ten months to have another election on that issue. This would eliminate that. You can go ahead and have it in the next six months.

BRANDT: OK. And I guess the other one's kind of a general question. You stated that one of your school districts only had a 29% voter turnout?

HOLDCROFT: That's correct. The Millard Public Schools voted to have-- two weeks after the November election, voted to have a special election, which they held on February 11 of this year, and they had 29.48% turnout.

BRANDT: And that was with mail-in ballots?

HOLDCROFT: Yeah. Yes. I mean, that was one of the options. I don't know if it was all mail-in ballot. It must have been all mail-in ballots, yes.

BRANDT: OK.

HOLDCROFT: On a \$158 million bond.

BRANDT: OK. Well, thank you for that. I guess I'm a little astounded. What we typically see in the rural areas is most of these are held with mail-in ballots, ballots, and we have very high voter turnout because it's very convenient. They know when that hits their kitchen table pretty much how they're going to vote, and they make sure they get it back. So, to echo what Senator von Gillern was, was saying, and in talking to some of our rural superintendents out there in the rural areas in Nebraska, they have a very tough time finding contractors even willing to come out there and give them a bid [SIC], and I'm very concerned that we would pass any legislation that delays a bid process. I think the amendment makes the bill better. I-- I'm still going to look at even if the bill is necessary. I mean, if we're, we're allowing them to rebid in six months, I don't even know why we would need the bill, to be quite honest. But I am, I am quite concerned on our construction costs, because they go up probably 5% to 10% a year, if you can even find somebody to come out and bid on these projects. I'm also concerned because this could have an unintended consequence on property taxes in Nebraska. If we delay our bidding process and the construction costs go up, it will be the property tax payers that will pay that cost. Also, when a school bond is passed at a general election in November, those schools do not have access to

that increased bond funding until their next budget is set, I believe, in July. If they would start construction prior to that, they have to get bridge loans from the bank, an additional cost that probably was not anticipated. So, I guess I'm going to sit back, listen to the debate. I'm not quite sure where I'm at on this yet. Thank you.

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

RIEPE: Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to echo the comments that were made by Senator von Gillern. And our districts are fairly close, and I think that as well as the congestion that it creates for contractors, and where-- with that goes a lost of competitive bidding, which means it's going to cost you more, actually, when the time comes to it. I also have a concern, as Senator Brandt pointed out, rural areas will be at a disadvantage because the contractors that would normally bid on this-- and these are not every contractor that, that comes out and wants to build a school; it's a select number. But the larger projects-- the projects, probably-- those larger projects in urban centers will take precedent over a more remote, if you will, school that's to be built. I would also ask if Senator Holdcroft would take an answer.

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

HOLDCROFT: Yes.

RIEPE: Thank you, good sir. My question is this: in the process of building this bill, did any of you-- did you look at the idea that would say you have to have a minimum? The 29% vote turnout bothers me. Did you have anything that said maybe it has to be a 40% or a 50%?

HOLDCROFT: No, the focus was to try to get the maximum amount of voter turnout by putting it at fixed dates. So, the idea of leaving it for these special elections any time you want them and, and living with the, the low verti-- voter turnout, that wasn't-- that, that is-- kind of circumvents the whole idea of the bill. So, the bill is all about reducing property tax by listening to the voter, and that's-- and I don't believe we are listening to the voter. I mean, we just had a, a bond election, \$158 million; we had 29% of the voters turn out. So, in my opinion, you-- we should be having-- we should fold in these special elections with already fixed-date elections.

RIEPE: Thank you very much. I don't, I don't totally disagree with them, because I think the ones that turn out are the parents and maybe the teachers that are, are there for that. But I have had a lot of

input from the schools and the contractors on both ends of this, and so I, too, will listen to the rest of the debate. I appreciate Senator Holdcroft's bringing this bill forward. I think it's worthy of, of discussion. Thank you very much.

ARCH: Senator Holdcroft, you're next in the queue.

HOLDCROFT: Thank you, Mr. President. Yeah, I don't quite understand this idea of the relationship between the approval of the bond and when the RFP, or the request for proposal, has to be dropped. Those two things, to me, are not tied together chronologically. It's all about planning. OK? And if you've got \$158 million project, I hope you're not just planning out three or four months. You should be looking at that project for at least two years, and you should have scheduled your bond approval date, and then a follow on much further down the line for the actual drop of, of the RFP for the project. Now, you're going to get-- I mean-- and when we're talking school construction, schools don't want to have construction during the school year; they want to hold them during the summertime, so they're going to start their projects in May, and they're going to try and finish those projects by August. So, just by the nature of that, you're going to have the contractors that are working on school, school contracts are going to be busy during that period of time. So, really-- and again, I go back to-- if you're going to drop an RFP in, let's say, February with a project starting, say, in May, well then, hold your bond election either in December or the previous-- I'm sorry, not December, but it'd be November or the previous May. I mean, I can't believe that we're talking about planning for these multi-million dollar projects with just a focus of six months ahead for the project. So, I understand the, the concern of the con-- contractors, and, and, and, you know, prices do go up; they're scrambling when an RFP drops. But to me, when the drop-- the, the request for proposal has no relationship to when the bond election is held. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

JUAREZ: Thank you, Speaker Arch. Senator Holdcroft, could you yield to a question for me? And I apologize if you answered this previously. I wanted to know a little bit--

ARCH: Senator Holdcroft, will you yield?

HOLDCROFT: Yes.

JUAREZ: Thank you. Sorry. I wanted to know if some person or some entity brought this bill idea to you. Is it something that you submitted in a session before, or is it just new?

HOLDCROFT: I-- well, there's-- yeah, there's both. The original bill was recommended to me by Platte Institute, who had done the analysis on, on the difference between the turnout for a, a special election and the turnout for fixed-date elections like primaries and, and general, general elections in even years. So, that bill was brought last year, LB878, and it's changed a lot since the initial bill. So, the initial bill would have only allowed election-- bond elections to be held in even years in, in May and November in conjunction with the primary and general elections. OK? We've expanded that the-- expanded that. The committee amendment then set up, in the odd years, dates in May and November, and added the option that they could be combined with a local political entity election, such as the Omaha mayoral election. You could combine it with that one. But still a fixed date where you're going to get a large turnout from voters. And then, this amendment eliminates a cooling-off period. The old bill had-- or the current bill, actually, has ten months. So, if you have a failed bond election, you have to wait ten months for another one; this amendment eliminates that waiting time, and you can come right back with a, a, you know, a, a, a retry at the bond election. Then typically, what happens is the-- they sharpen their pencils and they do a little bit more explanation to the voter on what this bond's going to do, but it almost always ends up with a lesser amount in the second bond election, which reduces property taxes. So, that's, that's kind of the history of the bill.

JUAREZ: OK. Thank you very much. I appreciate that. I just wanted to state that I really wish that, in all of our elections, that we had a, a greater turnout period besides these special elections, and it's really a goal of mine personally that I'm going to try to get more voters registered in my district to improve the turnout that happens in any election. I think it's just-- so many people are turned off from voting for various reasons, and that's why I want to support changes in that area. So, I can relate to the frustration of those low, low voter turnouts, but I do want to go on the record that I will be opposing this bill, and I wanted to add some other additional reasons why. I've received feedback that it's going to delay school projects if we restrict when bond referendums can be held and be tied to traditional elections, that it will disrupt project planning and cost taxpayers even more. If a bond fails, districts may have to wait up to two years before trying again, wasting public resources and escalating costs due to market inflation, and that it strains the

design and construction industry, raises costs, requiring all school construction projects to start simultaneously, leading to labor shortages, supply chain issues, and higher costs for taxpayers. And finally, the most important reason why I oppose it is because I hate for our school boards to lose local control. Thank you, and I yield the rest of my time.

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

DUNGAN: Thank you, Mr. President. I do rise today-- I-- curious about AM779, listening to the debate, trying to understand exactly what's accomplished with that, and then generally opposed, I think, to LB135. And I appreciate the conversation that we've had so far, and specifically, I appreciate Senator von Gillern's comments, because he does come at this with an expertise that I don't have, and certainly, I think, a number of us in the body don't have a background in that construction industry from especially the larger, I guess, macroeconomic perspective of what the impact is when you have a large amount of projects that are all happening at once, and the bidding is all kind of happening at once, and, and the increase in costs that could have. And so, I guess I would echo his sentiments and, and share that I have concerns from a fiscal perspective of what this is ultimately going to do to the cost of a lot of these projects. One thing I highlighted, I think, on General File that I'd like to just highlight again, is we're not just talking about building new things, right? When we're talking about a lot of these elections that happen, we're talking about maintenance; maintenance of existing facilities, and ensuring that we can update and upkeep those facilities, not to necessarily even expand capacity or what they're able to-- what they're able to do within the facilities, but to make sure that they have working HVAC systems, right? To make sure that they're able to accommodate students or faculty in a way that is appropriate in the year of 2025. And I, I think that that gets lost in the wash sometimes; I think there's sometimes a conversation about these special elections where it's always this discussion of expansion. We need to build this, we need to build that, we need to increase the, the, the, the capacity of the school by building a new wing or a portable. But what I was reminded of, when I talked to constituents about this and they were reaching out to me about the impact of this bill, is that it is oftentimes maintenance. And so, I think that is of particular importance. I would also just, I guess, echo some of the sentiments that Senator Juarez made with regards to local control. At the end of the day, I don't have a concern most of the time that the voters or that local schools are, are trying to pull the wool over voters' eyes, rather. I think that based on the information I've

looked at, oftentimes, in these special elections, you have a higher turnout than you do at other times. And when you have one issue that people are paying attention to, and when you have one subject that individuals in the community are voting on, it's easier for them, oftentimes, to both learn about that issue and to engage, especially when you're talking about these special elections that take place with mail-in ballots, where people have time to research the issue, they have time to ask questions. I know for a fact that when folks are inundated with a, a whole list of things on a ballot, whether it's candidates they're voting for or ballot initiatives, and then all the way down to the bottom of a ballot where you're often voting on judge retention and offices that aren't as common for folks to hear about-- things like board of governors for a community college-- it's difficult for people to, I think, fully engage from the top to the bottom of their ballot in a way where they feel properly informed. I know when election season comes around, I get a lot of questions. What does this thing do? What does this ballot initiative do? How, how do these city, I guess, decisions impact the, the way that our roads are going to be funded? And I think when you only have the one thing in front of you, it's a benefit to voters because they can dive into that issue in a way that I think is really helpful. So, generally speaking, I am in favor of providing that local control; I am in favor of allowing the voters to make these decisions. And in the event that one of these special elections is trying to increase, you know, the, the, the funding for something or increase taxes or what have you, voters can vote against it, and they have in certain circumstances. And-- they pass, they don't pass, we've seen both sides; these special elections go different ways. But the one thing that I think holds true is more people get involved in a special election, we want to encourage education amongst our voters, and by having one thing in front of them at any given time, I think we accomplish that goal. I think that there were potential amendments that had been discussed at a certain point on General File. I'd be curious to know whether or not those were also contemplated with regards to potential fixes for this. I-- I have not been in some of those conversations, but I have heard from colleagues of mine in the body that those were things they were wanting to continue to engage on. So, I look forward to continuing to listen to this debate, and I would encourage my colleagues at this point, without any further changes, to vote red on LB135. Thank you, Mr. President.

DORN: Thank you, Senator Dungan. Senator von Gillern, you're recognized to speak.

von GILLERN: Thank you, Mr. President. I just want to add a little color to a couple of things that I had mentioned, and then share a, a different piece of information. The-- Senator Holdcroft mentioned that an election can be held every six months, and that absolutely is true if the next scheduled election is six months away. The, the, the re-- the bill requires that you stay with scheduled elections, and there are times where there's a greater time span and, and up to potentially even nine months away between scheduled elections, so that even-- that kind of exacerbates the problem. And then, the, the comment about no relationship between bond dates and bid dates is, is somewhat relevant, but there absolutely is a-- at least a relationship; you can't have a bid date without having passed a bond. And again, I do agree that, that better planning by the-- on the part of the school districts and all of the, the parties involved with that would-- will make that-- could make that process better, so I certainly agree with that part of the bill. I'm going to read part of an email that I received today from Elkhorn Public Schools that kind of explains some of their issues and some things that I've been talking about. It says Elkhorn-- which is in part of my district-- Elkhorn Public Schools is a unique district, having experienced more than 30 years of consistent growth in our community that will continue for many years to come. This bill would reduce our ability to respond at the best time-- of the best time to growth in the district. As a result of many factors, Elkhorn Public Schools was able to wait an extra 12 to 18 months before pursuing our most recent bond election and the construction of two elementary schools, something that we likely could not do again in the future because of the timing restrictions in the bill. In addition, limiting the timing of bond elections and forcing all districts to do it at the same time will negatively impact both the rates for bond financing and, as you're well aware, the cost of construction, since the bill will make it harder for contractors to spread out work and purchasing power. The impact of increasing costs from this bill would also negatively impact taxpayers, who would have to fund higher costs for solutions to district needs. So again, my-- I rise prim-- entirely from a fiscal standpoint, concerned about the, the negative fiscal impact of this change. I do believe that the districts can, can work better, and I'm all for encouraging them to, to work in a more efficient manner and, and to plan the projects in a better way, and to not-- I'll use-- I'll just use the term to not game the system of using special elections to gain a desired outcome, and I think that certainly is part of what has inspired Senator Holdcroft to bring this bill, and, and inspired me to encourage and endorse at least those elements of the bill. So, with that, I'll yield back the remainder of my time. Thank you, Mr. President.

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

HUGHES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sorry, I was involved in a side conversation. I voted for this first round. Just kind of listening to what has been talked about, especially coming from someone that is in the, the expertise of building construction and projects like this. So, a little bit-- I'm, I'm starting to have a-- just a little bit of concern, and it, it kind of comes from-- you know, we all come from where our districts are and what we know with our districts. But I have two Class B schools, but then all the rest are smaller than that. And so, I guess what I'm-- I'm a little bit concerned of you pass a bond, everybody's-- if it gets passed, it's passed around the same time, there's only so many construction companies specifically that even do school buildings. I remember being on school board, we'd go to different events, and there'd be these-- the construction companies that kind of specialize in schools, and that's typically what you hire because that's what they know. So, these bonds are going to pass around the same time, and then the construction companies are going to, you know, have-- they're going to go out for bid. Well, who's, who's going to be a priority for a bid? It's going to be the bigger school, the bigger bond. I mean, that's just a no-brainer. If I'm a company, I would rather help, I don't know, a Millard project, which I'm sure is a lot bigger than what a little Centennial project might be. And so, then-- so, now I'm thinking, are we doing something-- and I, I do like the intent, as a voter, that you always know, if you're going to have an election, it's going to be in that-- even if it's by mail, it'll be around May, that second week of May, and that second week in November on those off years. I like that part of it. But I'm getting a little worried that an unintended consequence of this may be that on especially those smaller schools, those Class C and-- C1, C2, D1, D2-- are we even burdening them more with a higher cost? They already typically incur a higher cost because they're in smaller towns and villages; you're paying more to get supplies shipped to you, trip charges, things like that. And is it even going to grow even more because we're competing now, even more, with some of the bigger projects? So, I just kind of wanted to get on the mic and lay out where I was thinking just because how I voted that first round. I'm still kind of debating this in my head, and-- anyway, thank you. Thank you, Chair, for the time.

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

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. President. Colleagues, good morning, almost afternoon. I didn't want to let the rest of the day pass without taking a moment to wish a very happy birthday to our friend and

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colleague, Senator John Fredrickson. I just want to-- I, I want to acknowledge what a gift it is to do this work, this hard, meaningful, often thankless work with someone who leads with so much intelligence and integrity and heart. So, happy birthday! You've accomplished so much in just 28 years, and I can't wait to see what's next for you and this next trip around the sun. Happy birthday.

ARCH: Senator Holdcroft, you are next in the queue. Would you like this to be your close?

HOLDCROFT: I think yes. Thank you, Mr. President. First of all, there's something that Senator von Gillern said that bothered me, that apparently I haven't explained very well in this bill. A school board will never have to wait more than six months to have a, a bond election. OK? These, these dates are set up-- I mean, there may not be anything else on the ballot, but if the school board decides I want to have my bond election in, in May, they contact the election commissioner, and the election he or she sets up for that second Tuesday in May to have the bond election. And it may be the only election; it does not have to be an election that is already scheduled. I mean, it's great, you can-- I mean, if it works out for you, you can hold it in conjunction with the Omaha mayoral election, but you can have your own election all by yourself every May and every November. And so-- and then I get back to this, this argument that, you know, as soon as we do the bond, we have to put out the, the bid for, for construction. If you plan ahead, then you have your, your bond six months before that. I mean, if, if you're really up against the-- you want to drop something in April, well then have your bond election in November, the previous November. I mean, it comes down to just a little bit more planning. And I-- just to kind of wrap up here, we just got information about how much a special election costs by itself. OK? So, for-- from Brian Kruse in, in Douglas County, a special election costs \$700,000. \$700,000 for a special bond election. In Lancaster County, it's \$500,000; in Buffalo County, it's \$56,000; in Grand Island, another \$50,000. So, these are not cheap things. And if we can combine them with an already existing-- when that works-- election, we save a lot of money. And again, this-- the-- it really gets back, though-- the purpose of the bill is to ensure we hear the voice of the people. And so many times, when I knock on doors, number one thing is property tax. And we get out their bill, and you see K-12's big levy, and then they see the school bond, and they say, what is that? And I say, well, you just, you just had an election, you know, three months ago. And they say, I didn't vote in that. So, the people aren't-- are not-- and sometimes I think it's purposeful that they're not aware of these special elections, and we need to hold them

in conjunction with regular scheduled times for the elections. And that's all we're asking for here. And I'm sorry that's a little inconvenient to some of the school boards and superintendents, but plan ahead. I mean, these are multi-million dollar projects that we're asking the people to approve, and to just do it by mail on any old date just does not make a lot of sense to me. So, I appreciate a green vote on AM779, and your approval on LB135. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Colleagues, the question before the body is the adoption of AM779 to LB135. There has been a request to place the house under call. The question is, shall the house go under call? All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 22 ayes, 0 nays to place the house under call.

ARCH: The house is under call. Senators, please record your presence. Those unexcused senators outside the Chamber, please return to the Chamber and record your presence. All unauthorized personnel, please leave the floor. The house is under call. Senator McKinney, Senator Spivey, Senator Dover, please return to the Chamber. The house is under call. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, Senator Spivey, Senator McKinney, Senator Dover, please return to the Chamber. The house is under call. Senator Dover, please return to the Chamber. The house is under call. All unexcused members are now present. Question before the body is the adoption of AM779 to LB135. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 33 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the amendment, Mr. President.

ARCH: AM779 is adopted.

CLERK: Senator, I have nothing further on the bill.

ARCH: Senator Ballard, for a motion.

BALLARD: [MALFUNCTION] President, I move that we-- LB135 to in E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: There's been a request for a machine vote. Colleagues, the question is the advancement of LB135 to E&R engrossment. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Has everyone voted who wishes to vote? Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: Voting aye: Senators Andersen, Arch, Armendariz, Bosn, Clements, Clouse, Dorn, Hansen, Holdcroft, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth,

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Lippincott, Moser, Storm, Strommen. Voting no: Senators Bostar, Brandt, DeKay, Dungan, Fredrickson, Hardin, Hunt, Juarez, McKinney, Meyer, Prokop, Quick, Riepe, Spivey, von Gillern, Wordekemper. Not voting: Senators Ballard, Machaela Cavanaugh, Conrad, DeBoer, Dover, Hallstrom, Hughes, Lonowski, McKeon, Murman, Rountree, Sanders, Sorrentino, Storer, John Cavanaugh, Guereca and Raybould. Vote is 16 ayes, 16 nays, 14 present, not voting, 3 excused, not voting, Mr. President.

ARCH: LB135 does not advance. Mr. Clerk, next item. I raise the call.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item: Select File, LB326. I have no E&R amendments. Senator Hallstrom would move to amend with AM836.

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

HALLSTROM: Thank you, Mr. President. I had submitted this amendment yesterday in the absence of Senator Jacobson, and I believe he is going to discuss the amendment, and I'd yield my time to Senator Jacobson.

ARCH: Senator Jacobson, 9 minute, 40.

JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. President. This is a very simple amendment. We were looking, and after the-- around-- after the first round of debate, and noticed that there was a-- essentially, an error in not carrying through consistently in the bill to harmonize a, a section where we're talking about the lead generators. So, it's a one-sentence change that, that gets added into the section to make it harmonize with the rest of the bill. It's a very simple bill. The bill itself, as a reminder, is the bill to-- it's an omnibus bill brought by the Department of Insurance to upgrade-- update regulations, and the amendment is just changing minor pieces of-- or adding language in that particular bill, so. That's all I have. I'd ask for a green vote to move the bill forward. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Seeing no one in the queue. Senator Hallstrom, you're recognized to close on the amendment. Senator Hallstrom waives close. The question before the body is the adoption of AM836 to LB326. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 34 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the amendment, Mr. President.

ARCH: AM836 is adopted.

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CLERK: I have nothing further on the bill, Senator.

ARCH: Senator Ballard, for a motion.

BALLARD: Mr. President, I move that LB326 be advanced to E&R for engrossing.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. LB326 does advance. Mr. Clerk, for items.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. Amendments to be printed from Senator Hallstrom to LB398. Motions to be printed from Senator Machaela Cavanaugh to LB415. Amendment to be printed from Senator Dover to LB113. Notice of committee hearing from the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. New LR: LR95 from Senator John Cavanaugh, LR96 from the Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee, and LR97 from the Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee, LR98 from the Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee. LR95 will be laid over; the remainder, LR96 through LR98 will be referred to the Executive Board. Notice that the Appropriations Committee will hold an executive session at 1:30 in Room 1023. Appropriations, 1:30, 1023-- 1003, excuse me. 1003. Appropriations, 1003, 1:30. Name adds: Senator DeKay name added to LR92. Finally, Mr. President, a priority motion. Senator Sanders would move to adjourn the body until Monday, March 31 at 10:00 a.m.

ARCH: Colleagues, you've heard the motion to adjourn. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed, nay. We are adjourned.