

April 9, 1979

LB 457

SENATOR NICHOL: Senator Schmit, did you want to speak to the Goodrich amendment?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. Chairman, members of the Legislature, I am not sure that I want it to go back to the Public Works Committee but I think it is probably the best place for it to go at the present time so I would have to support the motion. I think that some good questions have been raised. I think Senator Simon has served a real good purpose with his direction of many of these bills. I think it called attention to the fact that there are some problems but I hope that we do not create additional problems by the enactment of these various types of bills. So often-times, you know, we have done that in the past. If we want to as a Legislature to operate and run the whole state, let's have the nerve and the belly to introduce legislation that wipes out the boards of directors of the public power districts and run the bloomin' things from this body. Let's wipe out local government altogether. Let's wipe out the counties and the cities and the townships and run the whole thing. You know this is the legislature that has passed about three lid bills and wound up with a mess of garbage every time and now we are telling the local entities that they don't know how to run their own institutions for the better interest of the public. I think it is time that if we don't think they are doing a good job we can change the structure. We talked about the salary increases for the board of directors of the Omaha Public Power District. Well, as I have said before, that has about as much impact upon the rates that Omaha Public Power charges their customers as I do. No one talks about the salaries we pay the employees and I know that some of my good friends who are strong proponents of this type of legislation are also in the forefront when those wage rates are discussed and advocated and I certainly am not critical of those wage rates because I don't know whether they are justified or not and I am certainly not the one that wants to go out there and crawl those poles and do that sort of work, so I am not critical of whether they are earned or not but I suggest also as I said earlier we have mandated to those entities many requirements which raise their costs and then we have a lot of nerve when we turn around and say, hey, look, it is time we put a lid on those costs. I think it may be good, and I would like to see Senator Simon be involved in a complete study of energy resources in the State of Nebraska.

SENATOR NICHOL: One minute.