

May 3, 1979

LB 461

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you Mr. President, members of the legislature. I too rise in support of the Simon motion to lift LB 461 from committee. I too serve on the Public Works Committee and we have discussed this bill very long and hard and come up with some amendments that were drafted by Senator Beutler that make the bill both reasonable and prudent legislative bill that will deal with some of the problems that we have presently in the public power industry in the state. I would like to make an analogy here that will probably anger some people, but I think that it is an accurate one. We've talked time and again about a bill dealing with health care cost, that is known as a certificate of need bill. I think that you understand the intent and the basic premises on which that bill was based. My contention is and my analogy is that this bill LB 461 is the certificate of need bill for public power. Basically the points are very similar in that we have...

SPEAKER MARVEL PRESIDING

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Wesely be sure you stick to the agenda. We are in a tough bind and we can't talk about certificate of need now. I'm sorry.

SENATOR WESELY: There is definitely analogy here, Mr. Speaker, because what we are trying to accomplish is the situation where you have different public power districts and entities that have goals and have wants and they put together their building package, their construction package for power plants in this case and it is fine for their customers. They have their customers at heart I think in developing these plans. But, there is a broader interest, a broader public interest that needs to be addressed and the body that is charged with that responsibility in the State of Nebraska at this time is the Public Power Review Board. Well presently that Power Review Board is very limited in scope, limited in impact and do not have the direction and criteria that this bill will establish for them so that they can truly make the best decisions in the public interest concerning the construction of power plants in this state. I do think that any attempts to paint this bill as harassment or negativism or an attempt to stop any future power plant construction in this state, I think that is wrong. I don't think that is the goal of the bill. What we want is carefully considered construction. Construction that is going to serve the best interests of all citizens in the State of Nebraska. That is the goal of LB 461. Now, I know that Senator Kremer is going to stand and speak in a minute about what the Public Works Committee will be doing in terms of studying the problems associated with public power in this state. We will be looking at the Power Review Board and