

May 11, 1979

LB 162

Association of Public Employees and I am representing the Association in this position, he is a lobbyist, he must file, he must disclose any expenses associated with it, he must disclose completely. Now if Owen Knutzen of Omaha, the School District of Omaha comes down to testify before your committee on a bill, Owen Knutzen is not a lobbyist. He is testifying only and for that reason he is not considered a lobbyist. The same thing would be true of the executive branch and others. Associations which are formed to promote that association's positions, like the NSEA, or PACE which is a political arm of the NSEA, or TAPE which is a political arm, or any of these groups would have to file as a lobbyist and have to then come before, you know, file as a lobbyist and report any expenditures made in behalf of their organization. But we are saying that political officials, like the county commissioner in Scottsbluff County, can come down and not be a lobbyist. They can come down and testify. He can talk to you, Senator Nichol, on 138 and he is not a lobbyist. That is what we are saying with this provision.

SENATOR NICHOL: So you just decide for yourself whether you want to be a lobbyist or not. It depends on how many times you come, huh? If that is true, how many times do you have to come before you are a lobbyist?

SENATOR NEWELL: Senator Nichol, if the lobbyist, if he represents the Nebraska Association of County Officials, as does Jack Mills, and he testifies before a committee and he says I am representing the Nebraska Association of County Officials, he is a lobbyist. He must report it. He buys you dinner, he must report. But if he is a county commissioner from Scottsbluff County and he comes down to testify in favor of a bill, he is an individual who comes down and testifies in favor of a bill. He is a public official. He has a right but he is not speaking for all the county officials. He is not speaking for everyone, he is speaking as an individual.

SENATOR NICHOL: I understand that. Just a minute, I am about out of time. All right, they have always had that privilege without this law, right?

SENATOR NEWELL: Well, we have never been really sure of that, Senator Nichol. We have always assumed that was the case and what we are doing here is making sure that is the case.

SENATOR NICHOL: Okay, my last question is, how come you want the commission up there to be telling you what you need?