

May 15, 1979

LB 262

here in the State of Nebraska since the inception of the death penalty in this state? The only one I know of is Senator Chambers and I wonder how many people in Senator Chambers' district have asked him to introduce this bill to repeal what the people of this state want. Deterrent, ladies and gentlemen, yes, indeed. It is a deterrent and you know and I know that if it deters one person from killing another person, it is well worth it. Case in point. Several years ago a lady wanted her husband killed here, well, in the City of Omaha. She hired two men to kill her husband. These two men knew that if they were caught and convicted they would have to pay the price and that price of course was the electric chair and is the electric chair right now. So what did they do? They got her husband and they took him to the State of Iowa where there is or was no death penalty and they killed him in the State of Iowa. Is the death penalty worth it? Well, in that case alone it is well worth it. Ladies and gentlemen, we are talking about cold blooded, premeditated murder in this instance. No matter what the proponents say to LB 262, the Governor and the Parole Board can commute at any time. This is why I have proposed this particular amendment to the bill. What does the amendment do? It says, well, it says very simply this. It says, let the people make the decision. In the 1980 general election the people of this state will have the chance as to whether or not to vote on the chance as to whether or not the death penalty should be repealed in this state. The death penalty as far as I know, and I am sure as far as the majority of the people in this Legislature know, that the death penalty has never been abused in the State of Nebraska. If it has been abused I would like to know when and the average time that a person spends in jail today for first degree murder is fourteen years, fourteen years. I, like most of you, don't like to see anyone die. I don't like to see anyone killed but I am convinced that those people on death row right now should be killed for the kind of crime that they committed. The most brutal, the most violent crime that we have here, that we can talk about in society, we are letting these people go, literally letting them go after fourteen years and I think that is wrong. I think we are all well aware of the fact, ladies and gentlemen, that state statute does not violate our state and/or federal constitution. What is the problem? Well, we all know that the problem, at least as far as we opponents are concerned, that Senator Chambers has enough votes to advance this bill to Final Reading. No matter what I say, no matter what any of us in here who oppose the death penalty say here this afternoon, we are not going