

recognize the problem which the Governor has brought to the attention of the Public Works Committee and the difficulty in recruiting an individual with the engineering background and then be able to afford to pay that individual a salary commensurate with his education and his work experience. The Director of the Department of Water Resources is probably one of the most important administrative positions in the State of Nebraska and if you look at the large number of water bills which are before the Public Works Committee today, you can see and just a large number of them that the responsibilities of the Director of the Department of Water Resources are going to increase substantially in the future. And I guess I know that there are some department heads in the State of Nebraska that we pay as much as, it is my understanding, it is as much as \$60,000 a year annual salary to some of these individuals and some of these individuals in my opinion have considerably less impact upon the lives and the well-being of the people of the State of Nebraska today and many years in the future. And so I guess I would be very, very concerned about lessening the requirements for background and education and experience that this position would require. But those of you who are not familiar with the requirements, the requirement is that the individual be a professional engineer. There is a significant difference, a tremendous difference between a regular engineering degree such as I hold and an individual who is a professional engineer. A professional engineer must have five years of work experience after he has completed his engineering studies before he can even begin to sit for the exams to obtain his professional engineering license. It is a very, very important degree, a sign of not only his education but the fact that he has worked in the field and has the experience. Senator Kremer asked me about this the other day and my instincts of course, as being an engineer myself was that we should keep this requirement. So I asked him what the former Director of the Department of Water Resources said. Senator Kremer informed me a few minutes ago that former Director Neuberger said that there were many instances where it was beneficial that he was, in fact, an engineer. So, I guess based upon the requirements of this position and upon the comments that the former director made that were conveyed to me through Senator Kremer, I would have to oppose the committee amendments and those sections of the bill that change this requirement. Again, I want you to realize how very important a position this is today and how much more responsibility this individual is going to have in the future and if we have to spend additional monies and raise this salary to attract the kind of individual that can adequately meet the needs of the State of Nebraska, then let's raise the salary and let's do that.