

March 5, 1981

LB 72

factor causing the need for increased revenues is the aging of our population. The number of fee exempt permits given to our veterans and senior citizens is rapidly increasing. No one is suggesting that these fee exempt permits be abandoned but they do serve as a drain on the facilities. Approximately 34 thousand free hunting and fishing permits are given out annually and I would like to add here, and Senator Dworak as I said did an excellent job, when we go out to a movie for one night and we are talking about a person that goes out hunting and fishing for one day, a movie will cost us anywhere from seven to eight dollars for two people and last two or three hours, or golfing fees, and I don't think that increasing the fees at the amount that we are doing so in LB 72 for people that can fish and hunt for the entire year or the fur harvesting permit which nowadays is a very valuable business, is asking too much of the people that are going to be using the parks. And I would hate to see all of this coming out of the general fund, out of the sales and income tax and I believe one hundred percent in the people that use the facilities should be the ones that pay. Another reason for increasing the fees, inflation is a major factor justifying these raises and I sincerely hope that everyone is listening when I say that the Games and Parks is funded mostly, 67.2% of their operating budget from the sale of these various permits. Inflation has made it difficult to meet the '81 demands and prices on fees that were last raised in 1976. In considering these bills I ask you, and I am talking about LB 72 now, but we do have LB 73 and 74 following and I ask you to consider this as an investment in the future of the State of Nebraska in our recreational facilities. If we properly develop our Games and Parks programs and furnish the citizens of our state with the recreational opportunities, I think that several years down the road, given the energy situation, we will be happy that we have done so. And as Senator Clark mentioned, many, many letters that he received as chairman of the committee and I am sure that the other members of the committee can vouch the same, I would think that these people would first write to the committee and explain their opposition to the bill but I can truthfully say that I did not receive any as chairman of the committee. Thank you very much and I urge the advancement of LB 72 from General File to E & R initial.

SENATOR CLARK PRESIDING

SENATOR CLARK: The question before the House is the advancement of LB 72 to E & R initial. All those in favor vote aye, opposed no.

CLERK: Senator Clark voting no.