

March 10, 1981

LB 190

PRESIDENT: Haberman amendment to the Warner amendment.  
Senator Haberman.

SENATOR HABERMAN: My Lord, members of the Unicameral, this amendment removes the lid. This amendment says the tax shall be collected period. I think Senator John DeCamp has gone too far in playing footsy with the railroads. In 1979 he played footsy with them, 1980 he played games with them and now he is playing games with them and us again. Whoever heard or show me another agency or show me somebody else that says, we are going to tax you but only so much, and then it stops. I never heard of this before. Senator Warner just said it costs from \$2 to \$4 million so we can say \$4 million it is going to cost, and how many are we going to build with a cap of \$5 million or \$10 million or \$15 million? We have to have the money if we are going to build these. They have to buy right of way and they have to have the money in hand so that they can commit it, so that they can get contractors to commit, so that we can move forward, so that we can get something done. The State of Nebraska is a funnel of the railroads. Our railroads are going to grow and grow and grow, and I don't think that they should be let off the hook when nobody else is let off the hook. Why put a cap? Somebody might say, well how do you know the money is going to be spent? That will be up to the Governor to see that the Highway Department does spend the money. It will be up to us to see that it is spent in Scottsbluff and North Platte, Sidney, Omaha, and the other towns that need overpasses and underpasses. So I don't think we should have a cap on it. Let's pass the bill, let's collect the tax and then go do the job. And I think when Senator DeCamp says he and several other Senators got together, I think this is wrong. I think we are the ones that should make this decision and why put a cap, why are they any different than anybody else? So I ask you, fellow Senators, to accept my amendment to the amendment and remove the cap and make it just like any other agency that is being taxed. They pay their tax when the tax is due. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT: Senator DeCamp, do you wish to speak to the Haberman amendment to the Warner amendment?

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President...Mr. President and members of the Legislature, reluctantly I rise to support Senator Haberman's amendment. I think it is a wonderful idea. We have given to the railroads in the legislation every single thing of a reasonable nature that they need to, first of all, set up the tax, collect the tax, put it into the