

April 13, 1982

LB 924

SENATOR CLARK: This bill is on General File? Okay.
Senator Chronister.

SENATOR CHRONISTER: Mr. Speaker and members, this is a motion to suspend the rules and place LB 924, which is now on General File, as amended with the amendments on page 1224 of the Journal, on E & R for engrossing. Now this is an unusual move but it is an unusual circumstance that we are facing. In checking this motion out, I have gone to Emory Burnett, the legal counsel to the E & R Committee, and he has checked all of the details and assures us that the motion correctly covers the situation. Now my only purpose in speaking is to bring to your attention a situation which I believe fundamental fairness to our citizens requires us to act today. For nearly seventy years the Nebraska Doctors of Chiropractic have operated under an ancient 1915 licensing law which says nothing about diagnostic X-rays or any of the modern tools of health care which they have been using for decades and they have been using these techniques under the supervision of the Nebraska Department of Health. They had planned to revise their law in connection with the sunset review process and to quietly bring their old law up to date, but then along came LB 421. This is the law that we passed this session which says, "Any insurer having knowledge of any violation of any of the provisions of the Uniform Licensing Law shall report the facts of such violation as known to such insurer to the Department of Health." Now what this means is this, that if we do not pass LB 924 this year, for an entire year the Doctors of Chiropractic will be trapped within this ancient 1915 law and in jeopardy since any insurer may wonder and report just about anything they do as a violation of the Uniform Licensing Law. In other words, the chiropractors did not do this to themselves or to their patients. We did it to them by passing LB 421 and I am one of you who voted for LB 421. Now what is my point? It is not that LB 421 is a bad bill, since I believe it can be a useful law in the future since it legally applies to all doctors but the chiropractors are the group that the bill may have been originally aimed at and in fairness we should pass LB 924 to modernize their ancient law and bring it up to what they have been and are, in fact, doing now to help Nebraska citizens get well. Next, we should remember that the purpose of licensing bills is not to help the doctors who are licensed but the public they serve. There are thousands of Nebraskans across the state who have been helped by treatments from Doctors of Chiropractic who cannot understand why we cannot find time to simply revise an old law which will permit their doctors to continue doing what they have been doing for years to help these people. This is a question of freedom of choice. Of course we can never make anyone happy in the health community because there is healthy