

SENATOR L. JOHNSON: Senator Barrett.

SENATOR BARRETT: Yes.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Senator Barrett, is Senator Warner's explanation accurate based on your understanding of the bill, that there is nothing in the bill that would prohibit a newspaper from charging more, necessarily?

SENATOR BARRETT: It is my understanding, and I could be incorrect that this is a cap, the bill is a cap, that's right, the legal rate for the state to pay.

SENATOR ASHFORD: I have the same problem, I think, that Senator Warner does. I think...I understand what the amendments are trying to do and I understand Senator Landis's amendment, and I...it is an improvement, but I think Senator Warner makes a good point. I think we may be causing some confusion, and maybe...Senator Chambers is looking at the bill and maybe can clear it up. But there may be some confusion about if we put a cap on what the state can pay and then make it a prohibition for the newspaper to charge a greater amount, we may be dealing with two topics here and prohibiting one thing and then charging someone else with a crime, and I'm not sure that that is what we should do under the bill as it's written now. So that would be...I have the same concerns Senator Warner does. I think we maybe have to go back in the body of the bill and change that somewhat before we add this amendment.

SENATOR L. JOHNSON: Thank you. Chair recognizes Senator Schmit, please.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, for many years we've come by this body, from time to time, and increased what was taken to be the legal rate for printing for the newspapers in the State of Nebraska. It's always been kind of an annual, or not an annual but sort of a regular situation, a ritual. And, as I recall, the explanations to myself have been that this will allow us to charge X number of dollars per line, or X number of dollars and cents per line. So I guess I am a little bit confused now after 20 years when we have some dissension here on the floor, and I really don't know who wants to answer this question. But have we been just kidding ourselves these past years when we have set a rate which is acceptable to most of the