

PRESIDENT: LB 114 is advanced. May I introduce some guests, please, of Senator Owen Elmer and Speaker Barrett. Under the south balcony, we have Larry Reynolds of Lexington, Nebraska and Doyle Lavine and Kay Lavine of Bertrand. Would you folks please stand and be recognized. Thank you for visiting us today. Move on to LB 43.

CLERK: LB 43, Mr. President, was a bill offered by Senator Bernard-Stevens. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 5, referred to Natural Resources, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Senator Bernard-Stevens, please.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. President, and members of the body, LB 43 simply increases the amount of liquidated damages for unlawfully killing, destroying, taking or possessing certain animals, fowl, birds or fish, such as follows, and you can read in through the text if you want. In essence, what we have we divided it into categories. Big game fees would go from 300 to 600. That would be, for example, elk, deer, antelope, swan, big horn sheep. Medium game fees from 25 to \$50 on the fine would be examples, turkey, goose, on conservation animals. And then we have the final category which is the statute already, birds and fish from \$5 to \$20. This fee is more than doubled because it was too low for replacement costs originally. Members of the body, these fees, in essence, are the first to change in fees we've had on liquidated damages of these...of this wildlife since 1929. Nothing has really changed since 1929. They were, in many cases, undervalued at this time. There are certain states, for example, Kansas, surrounding us, Missouri and Wyoming, who do not have a set value for game as we do in Nebraska. Other states surrounding us, for example, would be Iowa, South Dakota and Colorado. They all have civil penalty laws similar to Nebraska's statute 37-614 which is our liquidated damage law. What these fees would do would put us in line, number one, with those states surrounding us. And, number two...in fact, it will put us almost right in the middle of those states surrounding us; and number two, it would increase the deterrent at this point for poachers or poaching that is going on within the state. At the present time, the fees now are not a deterrent whatsoever and thus we feel it will be helpful for the wild game animals in this particular area. And, with that, Mr. President, that was the opening comments I have. I would