

May 11, 1989

LB 639

you want to take up your amendment now or do you want to go through the bill first?

SENATOR BAACK: Let's go to the bill first, and then we will do the amendment in just a little bit.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Chairman Baack, to introduce the bill.

SENATOR BAACK: Mr. Speaker and colleagues, LB 639 is a bill that deals with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. I know you may find this a little strange after some of the discussions that we had last week and some of the department bashing, I guess, that we did on the floor of the Legislature talking about how they have handled the rural economic development, and now I am, just a few days later, standing up saying this is a bill that gives more flexibility to the Department of Economic Development. It gives them a little bit more leeway in the way that they do things. It may seem a little strange, it may seem inconsistent. I am going to try and make it look consistent even though it may not be. This bill came out of a study that has been ongoing for about...it was ongoing for about 18 months, and what happened was is a committee, a review committee was set up, and this review committee was made up of Stan Matzke, who is a former Director of the Department of Economic Development, and also the current Vice-President of the Nebraska Bankers Association, and also on this was Lyn Wallen Ziegenbein who is Executive Director for the Peter Kiewit Foundation, Cynthia Van Ackeren, the Organizational Effectiveness Consultant for U S West, and, finally, Miles Friedman, the Executive Director of the National Association of State Development Agencies. These people did a review of the Department of Economic Development and found that there needed to be certain changes in the way the department was set up for them to function properly. And I know that the body, we made a decision last week that we want to add some field offices to the Department of Economic Development. That was a decision that the body made. I think it makes very good sense to now go ahead and do 639 because this is going to allow them some flexibility, and gives them a little bit more flexibility in the way that they do things within the department, and I think will allow them to do the things, with the field offices, some of the things that I would like to see them do. I think that we...one thing I am want to make very clear is I am going to be watching the department very, very carefully as we proceed with these field offices, as we proceed with 639, and make sure that they