

February 11, 1991 LB 68

CLERK: 27 ayes, 0 nays, Madam President, on adoption of the committee amendments.

PRESIDENT MOUL: The committee amendments are adopted. I will now recognize Senator Chambers for opening statement.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam President and members of the Legislature, it does give me great pleasure to stand to speak in behalf of the athletes who labor in an arduous game that provides entertainment and great financial wealth to the university. This bill allows us to place what I would call a conscience vote. It allows us to go on record declaring that since these players have to give more time than ordinary students, labor under more restrictive rules than other students, should be put in a position to receive some kind of additional financial assistance just so that they can survive. People may stand on this floor and say allow the NCAA to do it but they had a meeting in Nashville earlier this year and in a World-Herald editorial, dated January 13th, this is a direct quote from that editorial. "Regarding much of what was accomplished at the organization's Nashville convention last week, the value of the so-called reforms remains to be seen. Some of the enactments barely rose to the level of trivia, including the mandated reduction of training table meals from two to one a day. Cutting the number of meals in half hardly qualifies as a major reform." Then they did another thing. They want to cut the number of scholarships that can be offered and this is what the World-Herald said relative to Tom Osborne's reaction. "Tom Osborne, the head football coach at Nebraska, said the organization's decision to cut athletic scholarships by 10 percent could mean less opportunity for athletes, including low income and minority kids, for whom an athletic scholarship is a ticket to the college education they might not otherwise have." Then, as the proceedings rocked on and more and more oppressiveness emerged, this is the attitude of one UNL official and this is a direct quote from that editorial. "One NU official said that Osborne left Nashville looking 'about as dejected as we've seen him'. Considering what the NCAA has done and what it didn't do, signs of dejection from some of the other classier coaches wouldn't be surprising." That ends the quote from the editorial. I have also placed on your desk a handout which points out that this bill was passed in 1988. The Legislature passed it. The Governor vetoed it after we were out of session. You will see in that handout discussion of a letter, written by Chancellor Massengale, saying that they agree