

branding legislation that we have had all parties are in virtual agreement because, quite often, that's a very, very controversial and in many cases still is a very, very controversial part of our cattle industry. LB 218, for the most part, would change statutes so that the theft of livestock, regardless of its value, would be considered a Class IV felony. It cleans up changes in definitions, particularly from "burned into" simply to "applied to" of the hide of the animal. Other things that LB 218 is adds if a person effaces, defaces or obliterates a brand with intent to steal the animal, that person shall be guilty of a Class III felony and this defines criminal intent, hopefully, aiding the prosecution of the cases. And that is what LB 218 does. As I mentioned in the committee hearing, all of the people, the cattlemen and the Brand Commission and everyone came in and testified in favor or in a neutral position in favor and it's a bill that one of the few times people are in agreement and so, consequently, I would hope that we would move LB 218 along its way. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Hartnett.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Madam President, members of the body, if I could ask Senator Bernard-Stevens or Senator Carson Rogers, who is in charge of this commission, Senator Bernard-Stevens?

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Well, if I understand the commission, in general, it's the Brand Commission but the actual branding, as far as the licensing and getting the brand is through the Secretary of State, Mr. Beermann, if I understand, but Senator Rogers in Agriculture may be able to help a little bit more on that.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Is that right?

SENATOR ROGERS: Yes.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Okay, thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Hartnett. Senator Schmit. Does anyone else wish to be recognized? Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Bernard-Stevens, if I may, could you just reiterate perhaps the justification for treating livestock, regardless of its value, differently than you would treat the