

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Conway.

SENATOR CONWAY: Thank you, Madam President. LB 720, that we are discussing, in its form as the Government Committee wishes to change it completely strikes all the language that is there. Senator Horgan brought to the committee LB 720 originally, which was designed to address state employees who were called up in Desert Storm, and to try to make sure that their remuneration was situated in such a way that they would not endure any specific financial hardships for having been called up. As the committee discussed it, and held the bill for awhile, and was considering things, Desert Storm, then, came to an end for the most part, and at that point, we were just sitting on LB 720. Late in March, the federal government passed down the...what is classified or determined as the war dates to be identified specifically of people who have served in a foreign conflict and have served in a war. There were no...it was too late an opportunity to introduce a bill, and we need in our Nebraska statutes a description of what constitutes the Persian Gulf War period, and we didn't have those dates. Those are determined by the federal government, and I have before me the Congressional Record, which through a house bill identified the foreign war dates for the Persian, excuse me, the term "Persian Gulf War" which it would be officially described, and anyone who was serving in the Persian Gulf after August 2, 1990, and up and until the time that the President, through proclamation or law, determines the ending date, but we do have the beginning date. And anyone who is serving in the Persian Gulf after August 2nd then would qualify for having served in this specific foreign war. And what that means to Nebraska statutes is that for people to be eligible for Nebraska Veterans Aid, or county veterans aid, or Nebraska Veterans Home, homestead exemptions, working for the Department of Veterans Affairs, or being a county service officer, situations like that require one to have served in a foreign war. And so we need these dates in the statute to make anyone who served in Desert Storm eligible for these kinds of activities upon their return. So I am asking, or the committee is, through our committee amendment is asking us to strike the original language in 720 and use 720 as a vehicle to put in Nebraska statutes that the Persian War, anyone serving in the Persian War, after August 2, 1990, would be eligible for these benefits. So with that, I ask the committee amendment be adopted.