

Senator Wickersham can guarantee us that negotiations are going to be restarted. There are no negotiations. Senator Exon, Senator Pressler sitting on subcommittees are not going to be able to force that railroad to do anything, and, overall, most railroads have more power than the individual states through which they pass anyway, so there is nothing that those people are going to be able to do to compel that railroad to do anything. Rather than to go deeper into a swamp, which the passage of LB 783 placed us, we should not approve this reconsideration motion on 783A.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Ashford.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Madam President and members. I appreciate, as always, getting my daily or weekly lecture from Senator Chambers on why I do or don't do something. It is certainly much appreciated, and all of those of you...thank you. Thank you. You know, and anyway, I actually get them daily but only once in awhile over the microphone. The issue, as I see it, is fairly clear. Forty members of the Legislature just a few days ago, May 29th, 1991, signed a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission in which we, certainly as far as I can tell, made a very succinct statement of public policy, and that statement reads, "We do not believe abandonment of this C&NW from Dakota Junction, Nebraska to Crandall, Wyoming is in the public interest." And it went on to describe some of the reasons why. And it seems to me that when we signed that letter we did, in fact, execute a statement of public policy. Now how we go about funding that or how about...or how do we go about determining the best way to fund it, or whether we fund it at all, is a determination to be made by the Legislature. But to suggest that it is not good public policy to deal with this rail line in this portion of the State of Nebraska is to belay what we have already said in writing to the Interstate Commerce Commission. I signed it. I know Senator Chambers signed it. Senator Robinson signed it, and others who have spoken both for and against this bill have signed it. It doesn't necessarily mean that we are locked into voting for LB 783A or LB 783 or any other bill, and quite frankly, I would hope and I would think maybe, and theoretically, and I talked to Senator Lamb about this, that the best policy would be to make a statement in a...succinctly in a bill saying that it is our intention that this rail line remain open and not be abandoned, and then not make a decision on the money until the negotiations are completed, but it seems to me