

January 16, 1992 LB 301

SPEAKER BAACK: Time.

SENATOR HALL: ...just along the lines that you're talking about. That you're going to have to compete in the same arena.

SENATOR ASHFORD: (inaudible) the debate and then make a decision. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Cudaback, you're next.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Mr. Speaker, members, I urge you to support LB 301. I have met with several groups on both sides of the issue, and it does need to be taken up. I think they were both agreed that there is a problem and it should be brought to light. A small businessperson cannot compete and, if it can be shown that the bigger companies are subsidizing one part of their business with another part of their business that can't be controlled by the other side, then I think it should be dealt with. And I think we need to solve it through a hearing. So I do agree with Senator Hall and urge your support for it. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to address some of Senator Ashford's remarks here that...he said he was going to listen to the debate, so I'm going to respond to a couple of things he said. I understand your analogy, Senator Ashford, to your clothing store. You have a clothing store, you can't buy on the same discounts, the same situation as Dillard's does because they're larger and we don't want to, as government, get into the business of regulating Dillard's and saying, no, you cannot be in the...in the alteration business. I might...may be a better analogy, that the poor tailor over here can't compete with Dillard's because Dillard's gives free alterations and we ought to legislate them out of the business. I understand that analogy. The key distinction though, Senator Ashford, as I see it between this situation and the Dillard's versus the tailor's situation is, Dillard's operates in the free market system and they have to make a profit, just like the little tailor, through competing in free enterprise. The utility companies, on the other hand, are almost by definition, they are monopolies. Regulated monopolies, but they are monopolies. The way they go about setting their rates for their natural gas is, they go...in Nebraska, the only state in the nation, where they go to local