

January 4, 1995

acclamation. All those in favor say ay-. All those opposed say nay. Senator Dierks is elected as the Chair of the Committee of Agriculture. Congratulations, Senator Dierks. Next Standing Committee is the Committee on Appropriation. Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: It's a sign of older age I guess. If I put my glasses on I can see everybody, if I take them off I can see my notes, so maybe we'll have it halfway. See, that's correct, thank you, Senator Kristensen. Members of the body, and Madam Chairperson, I rise to put my name in nomination for the Chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee and I don't do this obviously very lightly. We've got a tremendous amount of problem fiscalwise, not only for this biennium, but for the upcoming bienniums as well. I also look at some of the things nationally that are going on. Many of you that may have been watching C-Span as I know so many of you do late at night, you'll notice that the goal of the new Congress that will be starting at noon today in Washington is that by the year 2002 they will have a balanced budget amendment in place which would effectively cut some 250, \$300 billion of federal spending. And that's money that obviously goes somewhere and that's going to affect the states tremendously. So our challenges not only in the short term are great, but in the long term even greater. And so I enter this, put my name in nomination for this position understanding full well the difficulties that lie ahead. The Appropriations Committee doesn't raise money, but we certainly decide how the money is going to be spent. And it's not our money, it's the people of Nebraska's hard-earned money that we get and our job is to make sure that we do what Nebraskans want us to do. And there are a lot of things. The budget is really Nebraska's budget. It's not just the Legislature's, not the Appropriations Committee, it's everyone's budget. We do monies for economic development so we can get jobs creation in Nebraska. And most of you who went to the tax seminars understand that one of our difficulty is our relatively flat population. We need to increase population and one of the ways to do that certainly is to have incentives to create more jobs and more opportunities for our young people. The appropriations, our monies, will help that along. We deal with rural health care, monies that we will be spending of the taxpayers' dollars will go to job training. Our children's education, helping the disabled and the poor and obviously protecting society. These are things that society and Nebraskans want and that we will have something to do with for