

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. We turn now to General File and LB 68.

CLERK: Engrossed...LB 68, I guess it's not engrossed just yet, it's a bill for...a bill introduced by Senator Schimek, Brown, Day, Hillman, Schellpeper and Wickersham. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 5, referred to the Banking Committee at that time, the bill was advanced to General File. I do not have committee amendments. Senator Schimek, would you like to open on your bill, Senator, or...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Stuhr. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Madam President and members of the Legislature, I selected LB 68 as my priority bill because I feel it is one of the most important bills that we will be addressing this year. I also feel the time is right for the legislation. If any of you have lost a loved one from breast cancer or know someone that has had breast cancer, you know the importance of this bill. LB 68 requires insurance coverage for mammograms. The bill includes only screening mammography, a radiological examination of the breast for early detection of cancer. It would require health insurance policies to include coverage of one mammogram for women ages 35 to 39, one every two years for women ages 40 to 49, and yearly tests for those 50 or over. One out of eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer some time during their lifetime. Early detection is the most significant weapon available to fight breast cancer. Screening mammograms can detect a lump as much as two years earlier than it could be felt. Experts agree that one-third of breast cancer deaths could be prevented if women were regularly screened. We all want a cure, but until we get one the best protection is early detection. LB 68 is legislation that will save lives and also be cost-effective. First Lady, Diane Nelson, testified on LB 68 and said that early detection cancer costs one-thirteenth the costs of a late detected cancer, that could amount to a savings of \$130,000 a case. You have some handouts at your desk that you might want to refer to. There is a diagram listing the states of the United States, and I'd like to point out that Nebraska is only one of five states that do not require mammogram coverage. The other states are Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina and Wyoming. In other words, 45 states do require this coverage. Breast cancer was diagnosed in 5,190 Nebraska women during 1988 to 1992. In your handout is also a