

April 13, 1995

LB 120, 316

General to Select File today. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Preister. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Senator McKenzie would move to amend the committee amendments, Madam President.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: I believe I yielded time to Senator Preister, did I not? Is there still time left?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Yes, you did, Senator Beutler. I apologize.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay, Senator Schellpeper, if you would, maybe you'd like to describe the third part of the amendment.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Yes, Madam President and members, Section 4 and 5 are, basically, LB 316, and this portion provides legislative findings regarding the need for economic development in rural areas of the state, and authorizes rural public power districts to participate in economic development initiative. For years, federal funds have been available to rural electric systems in other states in the form of grants and loans that are used in the rural economic development projects. Since rural public power districts in Nebraska have not been authorized in statute to apply for these funds, Nebraskans have not been able to benefit from the programs. Sections 4 and 5 provide that the rural public power districts may promote economic development and job creation projects by applying for federal funds that are available through the United States Department of Agriculture and other federal agencies. All loans will be made in participation with a bank pursuant to a contract. The board of directors of a rural public power district may also provide technical or management assistance to prospective new, or expanding businesses. They would provide assistance to a local or regional industrial or economic development corporation or foundation. They also provide youth and adult community leadership training and assist with enhancing the educational technology available to the community schools. So this is LB 316. I would be glad to answer any questions. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Beutler.