

April 25, 1995

LB 889

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Wehrbein, has the Department of Roads made...I guess all the agencies have come before your committee.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Did they mention the \$8 million in contracts for private engineers?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Now did they also mention that by 1997 that figure will go up to \$17 million?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And what was the committee's reaction to that?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: If we're going to have an expanded road program in Nebraska like most of us feel most Nebraskans want, it will be necessary to do that because they can't possibly do it all in-house.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Now are they operating under a hiring freeze?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, I'm sure they...yes, yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: So they're hiring more...they're having more of these contracts with these private engineers because of the hiring freeze...

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Well, I don't think consultants wouldn't fall under a hiring freeze. They've actually reduced their amount of people they have working for them from a year ago, around 50 people I recall.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Well, why would the director say that they're operating under a hiring freeze and that's why they had to hire...

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Well, these are professional people. You can't...these are engineers that specialize in that. They're able to put them on road projects specifically for that reason.