

release any of the funding for the housing project. This bill is intended to eliminate this confusion by explicitly placing the exemption in Nebraska statute, thereby avoiding the county-by-county determination. Thus, Indian housing authorities would be treated the same as public housing authorities under Nebraska statute, and Indian housing authorities would not have to seek county-by-county decisions. Public housing authority programs and Indian housing authority programs are both administered by HUD and have the same tax exemption requirements. The passage of LB 1082 is especially important to the Ponca Tribe because they do not have a reservation in Nebraska. Reservations are exempt from local property taxes, and therefore are able to participate in housing...HUD housing programs. And the Ponca's have 39 families on the list that live in substandard housing. Substandard housing could include a house with heat, electricity...or without heat, electricity, or workable plumbing. We have 39 families living currently in situations where their house does not have heat, does not have electricity or does not have workable plumbing. This bill would address that. Substandard housing may have unsafe conditions, rodents, or asbestos problems. This bill will help individuals better themselves and take pride in the property that they own. Furthermore, Congress has specifically stated its intent to provide all services and benefits to the Ponca's that are provided to all other federally recognized tribes under Public Law 101-484. Among those services and benefits would be tax-exempt status for the Northern Ponca Housing Authority. As I indicated earlier, I believe that this takes a very targeted approach to one aspect of the low-income affordable housing problem that exists in the state of Nebraska and would ask for the support of the membership in advancing LB 1082.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Madam President, members. I have a few questions about the bill, although one of those was answered by the amendment that Senator Maurstad put up. The original version of the bill had us delegating, basically, the federal government designation of who might qualify for a tax exemption under state law by having a broad grant of authority to the Secretary of Interior. I will look at the Maurstad amendment, and it may in fact take care of any concern I have there, I think it does. Because you need, whenever you cite federal