

1315. LB 463.

CLERK: LB 463, Mr. President, introduced by the Transportation Committee. (Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 17 last year. At that time it was referred to the Transportation Committee, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill, Mr. President.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Kristensen to open on the bill.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. LB 463 deals with the Light-Density Rail Assistance Act. As a matter of history, 1991 we created the act from its original title, which was the Agricultural and Industrial Branch Line Revitalization Act of 1980. Well, at that point what we really were doing, if you remember, there was the old CNW northern line across northern Nebraska, and what the amendment did at that time was to narrow the legislation really to that line to provide some assistance for the acquisition of that line and, as a matter of fact, it did not occur, of course. And what we've done now with 463 is three different things, and the purpose is to broaden that language so it will be acceptable to other branch lines throughout the state and to allow for their use of this act. The first is that the statutory language is rewritten to be consistent with the Federal Local Rail Freight Assistance Act. In other words, there's an act out there that...and there's some other phones or funds, excuse me, that have, for example, a revolving loan fund monies that would come through. The act is primarily a source of funding for projects under our act. So for other lines to use this, we want to clarify to make sure that it isn't just for the old CNW northern line, that it's eligible for everyone in the state and to use all the federal funding that may come to us. The second is that we would reorganize and try to clarify that there are different types of allowable projects under this act other than just the CNW and then the other is that we try to put some duties and clarify those a little more. It's more clean-up language, but to draw the lines between the duties of the Nebraska Railway Council, which we still have, and the Rail Division of the Nebraska Department of Roads, because they have separate, distinct duties. There was some confusion as to what was going to occur, who was going to have what duties, and we just spell those out. I think that's consistent with what we've always done. What does the bill not do? This is not a bill of