

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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SENATOR BEUTLER: Madam President, I would like to place my name in nomination for Chair of the Natural Resources Committee. Members of the Legislature, family, friends, I hope you all have had as joyous a Christmas and holiday season as Judy and I have had. We have tripled the number of grandchildren that we have in that period of time and Judy is, right now, in Atlanta, Georgia, welcoming Lauren Elizabeth, who is the third. Christmas season has been terrific except for one distasteful event that occurred on Christmas Eve when one of my associates at Nebraska Title brought in some little Christmas ornaments that were made of cinnamon in the shape of the state of Nebraska, and I bopped in, in the morning, without my glasses on, didn't look at the note, and bit off most of southeastern Nebraska and, let me tell you, cinnamon is...is sweet to smell but not sweet to taste. The question before you this morning is obviously a question of leadership. What is good leadership as the concept pertains to the Chair of a legislative committee in a Unicameral setting in the year 1999? Let me tell you just a couple of things that I think leadership means. It means work. It means diligent work to be sure that every bill passing out of the committee is in as good a form as it can possibly be in. Mistakes or omission cause confusion on the floor debate, eat up valuable floor time, and bog down the introducer's progress on his or her bill. Let me remind you that we are a Unicameral system and this is why I take the technical aspects of bills so seriously. We do not have a second house. We do not have one committee checking out the work of another committee. We, furthermore, do not have a conference committee that's checking out the work of two committees in the bicameral system. The other system that is used around the country provides several different kinds of checks. The committee, the committee is the main check in this system against inadvertently laying error on this body or passing laws that cause society in general, our constituents individually to be faced with laws that don't work or laws that work poorly or laws that don't...laws that don't fit. I also think that spending...thoroughly looking at bills in committee has a great advantage to the introducers of bills, because the committee members become very familiar with their bills and are better able to help them on the floor of the Legislature when the bills move to the floor of the Legislature. I think good leadership does mean fairness. Fairness is right at the top. Fairness means a thorough hearing. Fairness means