

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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January 25, 1999 LB 83

**PRESIDENT MAURSTAD:** Thank you, Senator. Senator Schimek.

**SENATOR SCHIMEK:** Yes, thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I just wanted to rise to say that we had a very interesting hearing on this bill in Government Committee, and that we heard from the National Guard, we heard from Richardson County Emergency Management Agency, we heard from the State Volunteer Firefighters, and what I came away from that hearing with was the fact that this compact has already been implemented by a number of states, particularly in the south, where they've had...where they've been battered by hurricanes so much in recent years. And it seems to be working very effectively for them. And one of the reasons that we...perhaps it would be of benefit for us to adopt this compact and enter into some of these agreements is, frankly, because our state is so large and there are so many geographical distances sometimes for that emergency equipment and personnel to get to the site. And one of the things they were talking about at the hearing, and I don't know if you mentioned this, Senator Wickersham, or not, but was the Pine Ridge fire. And General Heng mentioned the fact that it took too long to get helicopters from Lincoln to Chadron and that area at the time. When he got there it was just...it was an inferno, and so he got on the phone and got South Dakota to send some helicopters down, because they were...I think they were in Rapid City, perhaps. And they came down in a matter of 30 minutes, whereas, if we would have had to bring them in from Lincoln, it would have taken a much longer time. Sometimes the other state can help on an emergency basis like that, that improves our ability to handle situations. I appreciate Senator Beutler's questions, and I think that they're good questions. I do think this is a very good bill, and one that it would behoove us to advance at this point. Thank you very much.

**PRESIDENT MAURSTAD:** Thank you, Senator Schimek. Seeing no further lights, Senator Wickersham, you're recognized to close on LB 83.

**SENATOR WICKERSHAM:** Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Schimek was correct in her description of the discussion held in the committee by General Heng. I might note that our neighboring