

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 11, 1999 LB 514

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Time.

SENATOR BRUNING: An incredible amount of dockets and I wish to thank them for their service.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The Chair recognizes Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Kristensen, and Senator Bromm. Senator Kristensen, you had indicated a need for a little more time to go through your time line, and I'd be glad...I want to give you my time and allow you to do that, but I wanted to preface the...I wanted to say before I passed on to you my time to ask if you would do a couple of things, or I would invite Senator Bromm to participate also. In discussing the Universal Service Fund, in discussing programs that involve low income and also those who live in isolated areas, the two groups of people who are in need of subsidy, frankly, could you relate that to the penetration rate that currently exists in Nebraska; that is, is there some way of identifying...I haven't...I haven't had an opportunity to follow up on the latest materials, but what is the penetration rate in Nebraska? How do you define that? Is it 95 percent of all possible customers? That would be my first question. How is the penetration rate defined? And then, secondly, what is that penetration rate under the old system that we're moving from, which you say is very high, and I've always appreciated the fact that it has been very high. Then under the new system, with the envisioned Universal Service Fund and the program serving both low income and isolated customers, as between the federal funds and the state funds that we would be putting in, is that same penetration rate going to be perpetuated? That bottom line is my question, and as best either or both of you can answer that, I would give you the rest of my time to do that.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Kristensen, you have approximately three minutes left.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Thank you. I am going to give you, Senator Beutler, what I...the best knowledge that I have off the top of my head, and I think staff may be able to follow up. I believe the current penetration rate is in excess of 96 percent, and that's based of potential households. If it's a little