

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

March 1, 1999

LB 417

and commissions are pretty important that have members on them that are at large members, that are not specifically identified or required to be from a particular profession or occupation, and sometimes they are...they are directed to represent certain kinds of interests, like there are some boards that have environmental people interested in the environment on it. Well, from time to time, different governors look at things different ways and you would wonder whether somebody appointed to a particular general area really had any concern in that area, and finding out what they do for an occupation is helpful, I think, to the public in understanding where these persons are coming from in a general sense, but also in a specific sense on specific decisions it becomes or may become important. And so if it was the desire to eliminate this requirement on all those who are licensing occupations, and the requirement of the statute was they be from that occupation, that might be one thing but a broad brush approach like this I think is undesirable, and although I don't want to take a lot of time with it, I would...I at least want to put it to the body that we don't really need to do this and that perhaps we should simply strike it at this point. And if there is some narrower approach relating to specific boards or specific kinds of appointments that would seem to make sense, then let the proponents of this measure come in on Select File and make that more limited proposal. But in a...in a year when we have been heavily criticized in the press for having financial interest reports that are less than adequate, it seems to me the inappropriate message to the public to then use that inadequacy as a reason for doing away with the reports entirely. I might even look at this bill differently if the reports were, for example, enhanced with respect to the more important offices of government and then we did something like this with the less important ones. But the overall message that we're giving with this bill is that we're going the opposite direction, making government less open and not responding in any way to the criticism of earlier this year with respect to the lack of adequacy or lack of specificity and lack of detail in our financial interest reports here in Nebraska. And those are essentially the reasons that I'm offering this particular amendment lessening the scope of this bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Members,