

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

March 11, 1999 LB 148

together with some funding that's going to come in and be with us, and I think that it stands able to serve us very well in the future. We will have, unless we start picking on it like you did with this particular bill, I think that we can in not too many years fund a great deal of our problems in public health with this fund. But we can't do it if we take dollars out of it before we even get started. The interest that's going to accrue here, we have the ability, I think, and time, if the tobacco money comes through, to have a billion dollars in there, and think of the great things we could do with the interest from that. But we can't do it if we...if we attack it now and start taking it apart and using it for very wonderful causes. My good friend, Denny Byars, and I, we...we go for the same...we have the same interests. We are always trying to help the developmentally disabled. This respite care thing goes right along with it. And I understand the need for funding it, but I don't think this is the place and I don't think this is the time. We need to bring these dollars back to the trust fund and not attack this trust fund with any other outside problem. Make it work through the trust fund and, the people that are going to run the trust fund, let them make those decisions where these dollars are going. It really behooves us in all areas of health in this state to let this trust fund grow to fruition and not attack it and not take dollars out of it. Very tempting, it's very tempting to do that. There's always a need for dollars and there's always going to be attempts to raid the trust fund. There was always attempts when I was here early on to raid the Highway Trust Fund. If you were here with Senator Warner, you know that just didn't happen. He wasn't about to let that happen, and wisely so. Let's bring this back and let's take that funding off and let's keep that trust fund intact and use the interest only off of that. Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Byars.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. I rise to let you know that I'm solidly between a rock and a hard place. I certainly understand that we're now not talking about the benefits, the need, the public health need, the need for the citizens of Nebraska for the intent of the legislation that's LB 148, and I think you're going to hear that fairly clearly this morning in this policy debate, and I consider it that.