

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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March 15, 1999 LB 469

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Mr. President and members, and thank you very much for allowing me to be number one this morning. LB 469 is a telemarketing fraud bill and I want to preface my remarks about the bill itself by bringing to your attention that telemarketing is a big business in Nebraska and we're very pleased and happy to have the legitimate business telemarketers here in Nebraska. They hire a lot of people and bring taxes and income to the state. We have worked on this bill for about four years with the AARP, American Association of Retired People, and TRIAD, a group of law enforcement and community people who work to help older people and other people who are at risk in...in different ways. I think this is the third time we've brought the bill and we now have it out of committee. I prioritized it because I do think it would give our state some emphasis on the fact that we do not tolerate con people. Picture yourself, Mr. Bromm or Mrs. Price, your phone rings and a nice voice says, hello, how are you today? I'm fine. Well, I want to tell you that you have won a cruise and a trip and a vacation in Hawaii, all expenses paid. You don't have to do anything. We will send you the tickets, we will send you all the reservations for the hotels, and all you have to do is send us \$1,000. Or, better still, we'll pick it up by courier. If you could go and get your bank and get the \$1,000 in cash and bring it to us, we'll come and get it. Well, of course, there is no prize, there is no trip, and they take your \$1,000 and run, and that's the kind of people that we're after. These people sit up in a room with a lot of telephones and people calling and they have access to any mailing list that anyone else does. It's like a floating crap game because the minute the FBI or law enforcement knows they're there, they pick up and run. And you've watched that in one play in particular, "Guys and Dolls", where they were even in the back of a semi or down under the sewers, down under the ground. And this is actually...I mention that because these people are slimy, and the reason they are is because they prey on the most vulnerable people in our society, especially the elderly. Older people who are lonely welcome a phone call, and when they start talking to them they can't let go, and they start believing what they telling them...what they're telling them. So I have passed around to you the salient points, the key points, of this bill. I will go through them quickly. It prohibits telemarketers from submitting any charge through a