

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

April 7, 1999

LB 849

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I just wanted to address some of the questions that folks have asked me, since I designated this as my priority bill. And one was, you know, if they're termed volunteers, why do we need to pay them? And I guess volunteer is kind of a term that's used rather loosely. Cities have to provide workers compensation, if those volunteers are injured on the job, and so it's more than just simply giving of time. It's a lot of resources that they give. I have some documentation here where some diving equipment, some are expected to use their personal equipment. Another question asked was, why should the state participate in what seems to be a local matter? And all of you have a handout that shows the many state properties, particularly Game and Parks, that are protected by local political subdivisions, resources in firefighting. Another question would be, why does this need a state board? And I guess I would say that it has a sunset on the state board, and they have a mission to accomplish, and one year to accomplish that. I think what I like most about this is it allows a tool for local government to use to maintain their resources and the volunteers. It's permissive in nature, it's not a mandate. But it would allow them to enhance their local assets. So I really urge the adoption of this bill, and I would appreciate any questions you might have on this. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Hartnett, on the committee amendments.

SENATOR HARTNETT: I think Senator Stuhr had some more questions, I'd simply try to answer.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members. A couple other questions. Senator Hartnett, did you have a chance to visit with the State Fire Marshall's Office? Are they willing to undertake this new obligation?

SENATOR HARTNETT: I think...I think that the person from the...representative from the volunteer fire department that's lobbying for that, has visited with the Fire Marshall about it. Also, in the bill last year was anticipated that there would be