

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

April 20, 1999 LB 637

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...facts, and whatever is necessary to thoroughly understand an issue that is to be resolved. Then that official is to exercise the best judgment he or she can bring to bear on that issue. In the circumstances facing us today, neither Senator Kerrey, Senator "Haggling", Congressman Bereuter, Congressman Barrett, or Congressman Terry, not one of them has done as he ought to do in this situation.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Further discussion on the bracket motion to LB 637, Senator Kiel.

SENATOR KIEL: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. Members of the Legislature, you know, in a logical world, what we might see is the federal government coming to the state of Nebraska and offering incentive payments or perhaps even reward money because we're doing a better job than most states in collecting our child support. We have made tremendous progress in the last few years in increasing the amount of money that we're collecting for child support. But, instead, we are faced with some incredible sanctions, not because we are not doing a good job collecting child support and not because we have ignored poor women and children in this state and have chosen to look the other way because they weren't getting child support, but we are actually doing a very good job of collecting child support. We're seeing sanctions that say, in effect, we are going to further harm poor women and children in your state because we're going to pull money that helps them survive. This...this is not a logical approach to how do we provide better support for poor women and children. Instead, what we are saying, in effect, or I should say the federal government is saying, in effect, is you have some commodities in your state that are kind of a problem, those commodities being poor women and children; we don't want them on welfare. And it makes sense, obviously, to do a better job collecting child support. That is money that ought to be collected. But, in effect, we have dehumanized women and children. We have failed to see that these are indeed people and citizens of the state of Nebraska and we are saying or the federal government is saying, in effect, that we want them out of our way and, therefore, you will do what we tell you to do so that we feel better about claiming that we're doing something