

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

April 21, 1999 LB 76

CLERK: 25 ayes, 5 nays to cease debate.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Debate is ceased. Senator Bruning, you're recognized to close.

SENATOR BRUNING: (Microphone malfunction) ...closing, but I would like to ask for a call of the house as I begin.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The question is, shall the house go under call? All those in favor vote aye, those opposed nay. Please record.

CLERK: 20 ayes, 0 nays to place the house under call, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The house is under call. Would all unauthorized personnel please leave the floor. Would unexcused senators please report to the Chamber and record your presence. Senator Bruning.

SENATOR BRUNING: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, as I said yesterday and I'll say again today, this to me is the most somber, the most important subject this Legislature can debate. Taking away another person's life is by far the most awesome power a government can exercise. And I don't take this debate, this amendment I offer lightly in any respect. Had a very sleepless night, last night. And I've struggled, as a lot of us have, over the last couple days with this issue. And I believe, contrary to my colleague and friend, Senator Brashear, that this is a discussion of the death penalty on a broad basis, that this is a discussion of the merits of the death penalty. And I believe, and Senator Chambers has been up front about the fact that this is the first step in his continued attempt to abolish the death penalty. So whether everyone here believes that or not, I certainly do. Senator Chambers has been on record throughout his entire public service as being against the death penalty; in fact was quoted in the paper here on April 11th, in the World-Herald. Robynn Tysver's article. "This is a bite I'm willing to let the Legislature take." Senator Chambers here, "I believe when the result of the study comes forth the weight of that study will propel this Legislature