

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

May 12, 1999

LB 271

payments in lieu of taxes are paid on this property. And this will keep us from the Scylla and Charbydis (sic)...or, Charybdis choice of being totally exempt or totally taxed, because if you put us in that situation, we're going to fight like crazy to make this totally exempt. Why don't you allow us an option in which we could essentially create a system of payments in lieu of taxes for this property, so that we do contribute, but at the same time, we don't acknowledge the principle that this land is fully taxable? You'll get a contribution; you won't get everything. And you won't create the dynamic by which we turn around and use every power within our means to escape taxation altogether. Well, the committee who heard that said, generally, eh, we want to go with the policy first. We'll make this policy. It'll be general, it'll apply to everybody, no exceptions. And I offer this again because I offered it in committee. There were several of us in the committee, as a matter of fact, who voted for this concept. It did not succeed. So I think it's legitimate to bring it back to the body for the full debate on this proposal. I will say that it's an irony, because I just had a conversation with Senator Raikes asking if he'd consider a friendly amendment, since is his priority bill. And you know how charming he is as he kind of rolls his eyes and looks at the ceiling and checks his...that spreadsheet he has on his computer. But after about a minute and a half, the answer came back, no, I don't think so. Well, Senator Raikes is responsible for LB 860, as I recall. And this is, all the telecommunications facilities operated or supervised by the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission shall be operated at all times on a noncommercial basis, except that revenue may be generated from other nonprofit or commercial sources by the lease of excess transponder capacity. What's that? It says, ETV, take this, and if you've got any extra capacity, go sell it. Go sell it to the commercial field. And all lease arrangements authorized by this section shall be made for the purpose of paying a portion of the costs associated with satellite capacity. Why? Well, if you sell this extra space, we'll get money from them, and we'll pay for the public asset. What are these airport authorities doing? They're taking extra capacity, they're selling it in the commercial marketplace at fair market value, and they're taking the money and running an airport authority. That principle was adopted by this Legislature in LB 860 for exactly this reason. And by the way,