

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

May 27, 1999

LB 849

motion to return LB 849.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. First, I have visited with Senator Hartnett and he knows that I do intend to withdraw this amendment. But the amendment has to do with the fiduciary liability in regard to PERB, and I believe that it is important to make a few points in regards to this bill. I do want to make it clear that I have supported the bill, and will continue to do it, the incentives for recruiting volunteer emergency responders, but I do continue to have concerns. I realize that our communities do rely heavily on volunteers to do a variety of services. In fact, firefighters are almost held as in high esteem as motherhood and apple pie. But I still have a number of questions that I believe that need to be addressed and put on the record. The effective date of the program has been delayed. It will not actually take effect until a couple of years. Last week things moved very quickly on this bill and there was an amendment, a Smith amendment that was adopted, whereby, the state funding was removed from the program, but we still have the involvement of the State Fire Marshal and the Public Employees Retirement Board. Local entities will now be the only group that will be contributing the \$100 per year to be eligible volunteers. I think there continues to be a question about how many volunteers there might be or how many districts will establish the program. Right now I think we can only guess about those numbers. PERB will need some dollars, possibly not until the year 2000. There will be some administrative costs involved in the program. Out of the \$100, possibly \$40 could be used for administrative costs. So that really doesn't leave much left for the volunteers in the amount of interest that they might be able to earn. I have some questions that I would like to address to Senator Hartnett and, hopefully, he would respond.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Hartnett.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Yeah. We're playing musical chairs here.

SENATOR STUHR: What happens if there's no additional state funding next year?

SENATOR HARTNETT: What we're going to pursue, Senator Stuhr,