

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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LB 1092

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Robak. Senator Dierks, you're recognized on the committee amendments. (AM2552, Legislative Journal page 820.)

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I believe that I would allow Senator Robak to continue on her introduction of the bill and then take up the committee amendments.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Robak.

SENATOR ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Dierks, for that time. Just to finish, I know there are people working within the Department of Agriculture and Economic Development right now to have a cooperatively owned locker where they could process their meat. There was an article on the front page of the Lincoln Journal Star yesterday where the pork producers were talking about this type of opportunity. If the state could help them develop a state inspected plant, the benefits would multiply. The community would have a new plant built. We would all rush out and buy a label pork because we know it's Nebraska, it's local Nebraska pork, and we could have people working in the local locker. The community benefits: we're creating jobs, jobs staying in the community, and we're creating small businesses that are going to help in the lean times when we may see commodity prices drop. Hopefully, they won't drop any further. This would help the farmer keep the money in his community. Finally, I'd just like to point out that this...that...out the value this might have to some of our very traditional but nonconventional farmers. This bill was appointed in...was supported in committee by the Nebraska State Buffalo Association and the...and by the Winnebago Tribe. The yellow sheet in your packet is the testimony from the Buffalo Association in support of the bill. We heard testimony about the difficulty these folks have getting their bison slaughtered in the USDA plants because bison are unruly, large animals. It's just a whole other beast. Currently, the federal Meat Inspection Program charges an additional cost for processing bison and other exotic animals. Of course, that is if you can even get those animals processed at a USDA plant because many USDA plants won't even slaughter them. We have a number of groups in Nebraska that raise bison. A state meat inspection program would help them to