

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

March 15, 2000 LB 1399

they can achieve a standard that has the respect of the community and the state, and that they can, in addition to a regular salary schedule, be able to be rewarded for this level of quality and have the prestige that goes along with it. This isn't about being equal and fair and providing something for everybody. This is providing something for the very highest quality teachers in the state, encouraging them to stay in the profession, not to leave, and rewarding them for the work that they do, not only in their schools, but in other areas. I would like to read some of the testimony that Senator Bohlke referenced of the teacher from Seward who came on behalf of the teachers who have the certification to give us an example of her type of work and what she had to go through to get it. But I want to start with her concluding remarks because I think they frame this discussion: Going through the process of National Board Certification renewed my interest in teaching and striving for excellence. This is a teacher who had been there, I believe, 30 years had taught, or quite a significant amount of time. The process helped me deepen my subject matter knowledge and aided in helping me become a more skillful teacher. Every day I compare my teaching practices against the National Board standards. It has motivated me to serve as a role model and a spokesperson in an effort to strengthen the teaching profession. My wish is for all experienced teachers to strive for National Board certification. However, as I share my story, many teachers look at the time, effort and money I exhausted and question the rewards. They see the results of my labors as being asked to work on education committees at the local and state level, to mentor new teachers and other time and energy-consuming tasks without personal gain. They see that a number of states reward their educators with incentives and financial rewards for national certification, but Nebraska does not. At a time when quality education is more important than ever and our nation is experiencing a teacher shortage, the state of Nebraska must keep and reward its best teachers. We must create a program that offers new and experienced teachers the motivation to work and strive for excellence. Please support the establishment of a Master Teacher Program. And I want to tell you some examples of what she had to show to get the different categories of certification at the national level. And, as I mentioned earlier, and you can see in the quick facts, the goals of the National Teacher Program are to show the