

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

March 16, 2000 LB 352, 1363A

record.

CLERK: 36 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the advancement of LB 1363A.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The bill is advanced. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 352 was a bill introduced by Senator Crosby. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 12 of last year, at that time referred to the Health Committee, advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM2000, Legislative Journal page 416.)

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Crosby, you're recognized to open on LB 352.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Mr. President and members. It's a real privilege and pleasure again for me to bring to you LB 352 which creates the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Act. The commission would consist of five members appointed by the Governor. You might remember, this bill was introduced, I brought it in with several other people in 1997, it passed and then was vetoed by Governor Nelson. And I have high hopes, that perhaps, I'll get it through this time without a veto. The commission would replace the current state program for the blind, which is under the Department of Health and Human Services. And way back it was always in the Department of Institutions before the merger. And this is known, in the department it's known as the Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired. On the operative date of this act, all existing contracts and agreements in effect with the Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired shall be binding and effective upon the Commission for the Blind. All property, equipment, supplies and personnel under the Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired would be shifted to the Commission for the Blind. The commission would have the authority to adopt rules and regulations and to implement the purposes of this bill. The reasons for creating a separate commission and to serve the visually-impaired community in Nebraska is to improve services and to guarantee specific expertise and quality of professionals required for appropriate rehabilitation services, to provide more direct consumer