

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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April 10, 2000 LB 819A

CLERK: I have nothing further, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Beutler, you're recognized on the advancement of LB 819A.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I just wanted to take note of one thing that Senator Jensen is doing in this bill, and would very much like to encourage more of it. You will note that the bill itself involves the additional licensing of additional types of facilities, and that additional licensing requires an increased expenditure in accordance with the A bill, as now amended. In the past, we have oftentimes paid for these kinds of costs, in fact, previously, we have paid for these costs, these kinds of licensing fees, with General Funds. And we do that in an awful lot areas, the consequence of which is to tax our sales and income tax revenues instead of making those who benefit from the regulation essentially pay with fees for the licensing that is done. But in this particular case, the totality of the increase in the regulatory program is being paid for by fees, and I think that that's a good sign and a good direction in which to go, and I would certainly like to encourage Senator Jensen and others to take a look at the existing General Funds that are funding some of this very same kind of program and give serious thought to. And I'm going to ask the Appropriations Committee also to give serious thought to further reliance upon licensing fees as opposed to General Funds, in this particular area. I hate to see comparisons of Nebraska with other states, showing us higher in our sales and income tax than surrounding states, and I'm sure you do, too. And I don't know to what extent that that fact may be somewhat attributable to the fact that we don't use fees whenever we can, but oftentimes rely upon General Funds and tax our General Funds which, of course, then drives up our per capita expenditures in terms of sales and income tax expenditures. It makes us look like we're a high-spending state. I'm sure not the total solution, but one part of the solution to getting these figures in a more comparative, a better comparison with other states is to stop using General Funds for the various types of regulatory programs that I think, at least philosophically, make a lot more sense to be paid directly by those who are being regulated in some...out of some kind of fee system. So, Senator Jensen, I wanted to express how