

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

April 11, 2000 LB 717

SENATOR PREISTER: As the members are coming in, I will do my closing. I will start by thanking Senator Pederson, because I think he said it very succinctly, you don't need insurance until you need it, and that's exactly what this override would do. It would provide \$150,000 for three years, it ends after three years. The importance of this money is that it provides seed money. There is federal HMEP grant monies that are available, but those monies are not available, except as reimbursement for monies already spent. If the LEPC's have no way of generating money and they have no money, they can't spend any money. If they can't spend any money, they can't apply for these grants and get reimbursed. This gets them started, this gets the plans up and operating, this engages the community in educational opportunities, it lets people know information to help save lives and to save property secondarily. It is something that, when we...right now we're sitting here and have no problems that we readily identify, it doesn't seem needed. But Senator Pederson was right, some times we can be too thrifty, we cannot spend money, and then at a later time when we have that catastrophe we say, oh, I wish I had. We have the longest running stretch, I believe, of Interstate of any state going from east to west in Nebraska; that carries a tremendous load of hazardous materials. We also have a rail line that goes through Nebraska, carrying hazardous materials. We also have pipelines, we have storage facilities, fixed facilities, we have hazardous material surrounding us all the time. What we need to do is not just ignore that and bury our head in the sand, we need to prepare for catastrophes. Better preparation means we're less likely to have those actually happen. This \$150,000 for three years, and then it goes away, is, I think, an investment in the entire state. Approximately \$2,000 of that money will go to each LEPC; it will affect every, single one of your counties, it will affect every senator in here. I'm not standing here with my priority bill, asking to give all this money to Douglas County; this money will go statewide to all of the LEPCs in equal fashion. I think that's very important, that's why I prioritized the bill. And I might say this is somewhat unique. I think in the eight years that I have been here, other than the homestead exemption, I have yet to introduce a bill that had an appropriation attached to it, so I'm asking you, in eight years, for \$150,000 for three years only, and then it goes away. I