

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

January 8, 2003

worked with these people. It is my intention to retain the current committee staff. I feel we have competent staff. I think that's something that's oftentimes overlooked, that we could continue to use the existing staff. And I believe it's important to do this to maintain the efficiency of the committee. I promise that I will continue the straightforward, honest approach that has been practiced by the former Chairman. And I gladly would accept any suggestions from fellow senators. I look forward to serving as Chairman of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee, and I certainly would appreciate your support. Thank you.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: Thank you, Senator Baker. The Chair would recognize Senator Bourne.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature. A wise individual once said that brevity is the soul of wit. And I think that he uttered those words in similar circumstances to this morning, so I'll be very brief. I submit my name to you for your consideration as Chair of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. The state and the Legislature are facing pretty much historic times. We're having record deficits, falling revenues, and quite honestly, there's no end in sight. I believe that committees will be having an increased role than they have in the future. I think in the future they will be having an increased role and having an impact on what gets cut and what doesn't. It's vitally important that we make significant cuts so that we can solve the budget crisis, and yet not make cuts that decimate or devastate the future of Nebraska. I feel that my strengths would best serve the Legislature as Chair of the Transportation Committee because I feel that with my past experience I can balance and weigh what cuts make sense in light of our significant deficits and what cuts would cause harm to our future. A couple of years ago, I placed an amendment on a centralized child support bill that required that the associated call center, the call center that was associated with the centralized child support, be placed in rural Nebraska. A lot of people said, why would an Omaha senator place an amendment on a bill requiring jobs to be located in rural Nebraska? It's because I strongly feel that unless the entire state enjoys economic prosperity, we'll never