

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

January 29, 2003 LB 122

my understanding about half the commissioners don't even get reimbursed for their expenses. So, you know, if you have any questions about Game and Parks, about the system, why, there will be plenty of chances to get better acquainted with them if you're a new senator. It's a marvelous system and I think it's very well run, and we need to support them and this is one way we can do that. I thank you for your time.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Schrock. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. President, members of the body, I just want to rise briefly and express, I guess, the dilemma that this type of issue presents from an appropriations standpoint. And I'm not...I don't think I'm disagreeing with what Senator Schrock said in terms of General Fund versus Cash, in the fact that it won't...it doesn't necessary increase General Fund, but it does increase the pressure for more General Funds in this area. This is about a 30 percent General Fund/70 percent Cash Fund area. And I listen carefully to Senator Chambers and, surprisingly, many of the times I agree with him. This issue is a difficult one. I hear what his point is. The dilemma we have is, in order to maintain our parks, there has to be some money come from somewhere. And even though this will not necessarily replace General Funds, it does increase the pressure for more General Funds if we are to maintain the parks in the manner to which the public in Nebraska is accustomed to. That really is the issue, whether it's Platte River State Park...I have several parks in my district--Louisville, Platte River, Mahoney, Nebraska City Arbor Lodge, probably two or three others that I can't remember at this point, but those are the key ones; special wildlife area at Plattsmouth. All of these cost money to maintain. Somewhere that money has to come. If we do not do this and we resist the pressure to do General Fund increases, which I promise you that will be the case, we will not be able to put additional General Funds in at this stage of our life and I'm not even sure we can over the next few years, then something is going to happen. There will be a ripple effect. There will be a deterioration in the funds in those parks, or there will be some closures. I haven't even talked to Game and Parks about this. I'm only making that assumption, so...but something has