

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

January 31, 2003 LB 357

there's...it's an oversight for us. And I'm probably more concerned about that than anything else. But I don't know whether it's a chicken or an egg issue. I guess the way it's been stated here that at some degree that is it. Whether our law says no General Funds will protect us in case we get into serious mandates from the federal level, I'm not sure. On the other hand, we'll...based on the furor raised nationally about the adequacy of elections and laws and so forth, although Nebraska has not been in that serious problem, to me, this is typical overkill by the federal government as what they're mandating, and they darn well better be providing us funding for that. And I think it behooves us to be cautious, but, on the other hand, I think we just as well have those laws in place that you've done here and the next two. I guess we're going to hear more as we go along. So I'm...in conclusion here, I'd say we ought to have a line-item fund, "appropriateable" fund that we could at least have some oversight over, based on the cooperation that I know we'll get from the Secretary of State's Office, and that we ought to be cautious about whatever answers that we can give on whether these funds will continue from the federal level. Because I think typically for us, as I remember what you said yesterday, it is overkill, especially for Nebraska, but that's the way the federal government works.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members. Senator Wehrbein, I have no disagreement with what you've just said and I would hope that the Appropriations Committee would take some ownership in this issue and I am...I feel virtually certain that the Secretary of State's Office is not going to propose something that's going to put us out on a limb and we're going to have to pick up the pieces after the federal government has left us hanging. Now that's not a very good metaphor. Let's...forget that. (Laugh) But I don't think that the Secretary of State will want to get into a big project, for instance, unless the Secretary of State knows that the money is there. There are other issues that could be addressed. I don't recollect right off the top of my head how much that computer project, that statewide voter registration project, is going to