

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

February 10, 2003 LB 222, 381A

SENATOR CUDABACK: Record please, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the advancement of the A bill.

SENATOR CUDABACK: LB 381A does advance. (Visitors introduced.) Mr. Clerk, next agenda item.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 222, by Senator Bourne. (Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 10, referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee for public hearing, advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM0100, Legislative Journal page 327.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Bourne, you're recognized to open on LB 222.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, this bill changes the duties and obligations of what's known as the merit commission. I'll give you a brief history of what the merit commission is. This section of statute was put in a number of years ago and it basically allowed counties the ability to establish merit commissions to hear grievances from the county sheriffs for rank and pay disputes. Over the years, the commissions have, in addition to hearing grievances regarding rank and pay, they have expanded that so that they hear all types of employment grievances from the sheriffs. Recently, in my county, some confusion arose as to whether or not merit commissions had the ability to hear grievances other than rank and pay, and this bill clarifies that merit commissions shall hear grievances and appeals from sheriffs regarding all aspects of employment. The real meat of the bill, or the real substance of the bill, is found on page 10, and I'll just read you the first sentence. Says, "Any deputy sheriff may grieve a violation of employment contract, personnel rule, or state or local law or any other matter of employment dispute to the commission." And here's the gist of it: "The commission shall hear the grievance at the next regularly scheduled meeting," and then it goes on to further discuss the duties. So, basically, it's a change from the commission may hear other grievances to