

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

February 12, 2003 LB 259

law here, or the statutes as they existed, was to relieve some pressure off of the state highway systems. And, in my particular district, they are two major shipping points with 110-car unit load out, and if they can't get these 286,000-pound cars down the track, they're obviously not going to be able to transport their grain by rail and it's going to be transferred back to the highway system, which is under enough stress as it is now. So it's important we pass this bill. And I, as far as Senator Beutler's concerns, I understand them. I'm with Senator Bromm, I don't think there's a problem there, and that there's no state money in the fund now. It's all...it's \$2.7 million plus the interest that's accrued on it for a number of years. There hasn't been any loans made out of the fund so...and I don't anticipate the state putting any funds into it. Obviously, in the short term, we have no funds available. So it's important that we pass this bill. I really believe that in the case of my local district, if we don't, we're going to see a transfer of a lot of grain into trucks and thereby increase the maintenance costs to the local highways. So I would hope that we can pass the bill. Thank you.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Bromm, you're recognized to speak.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Madam President. If Senator Beutler would care to, I would like to continue the discussion.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Senator Beutler.

SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Beutler, and again you have more history than I have, but my understanding is that the purpose of this bill is simply to facilitate the lending of money rather than to permit the investing into short lines and using this money to invest in them, and I think that's why the words are omitted, although I didn't originally draft the bill. There are a couple of loans. The last loan was made in 1993, as I understand it, and the loans that...prior to that were, like, in '88 and '86, and I believe those loans have been repaid. There are a couple of payments left on this '93 loan, so...and that's Nebraska Central Railroad, so it has been functioning except that in the last nine years or so they just...ten years now, they haven't