

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

March 6, 2003

LB 165

the ability of the current utility to operate it. I'm questioning this body granting statutory authority to indemnify against negligence, and that's an important issue. And when people say that we're responsible now, that's true, but we also have the employees, we also have the elected body who's accountable directly to the ratepayers, but we're shifting all of that, including the license. The license will no longer be held by NPPD. The license will then be held...the Nuclear Regulatory Commission will transfer that license over to NMC. They don't have members in Nebraska who were elected, who go to them directly. They don't even operate in Nebraska currently. And I will talk later, I don't have time right now, about some things that are on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's web site about their status. That's a separate issue. The thing that right now I'm stressing is the issue of negligence, the issue of responsibility. And when that responsibility is in Nebraska with a publicly-held utility by an elected board of representatives by the people in that district, that's a whole different scenario, and that responsibility is shifted and the negligence is shifted and this body is granting that authority, and we're doing it, and in some of the discussions, as if that's the only option. I readily admit that there are things that could be improved at the nuclear power plant, but this isn't the only option. And, yes, the board members have discussed other options, but they have not necessarily ruled all of those options out and some of them are on the table. When Senator Brashear talked about other options and dreaming, I liked the sound of that until he got to the point where he was looking at selling off public power. That's a part of what I think this is doing. We're starting. We're taking a step down the road of privatization of public power. I don't like going down that road. I don't like taking that first step. I don't think indemnifying and allowing that to happen is good public policy. That's the issue, and having that license in the name of somebody outside of this state, I keep stressing, because that is a major shift in public policy. That's a move in that direction. And so when we talk about privatizing or selling off public power, I'm a supporter of public power. I think George Norris did a good job in creating public power. I think it has served us well over these years. I want it to continue serving us well into the future. I think it can do the job more