

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

March 25, 2003 LB 608

flexible with our incentives. We need to be reasonable as well. And I think that the Pederson amendment is very reasonable. When we look at the Department of Roads issue that Senator Schimek brought up, certainly that was an issue. And I believe it all boiled down to the contract. But that was a state employee issue, and I think that that is separate, definitely, from LB 608. But I rise in strong support of Senator Pederson's effort to make these factors of economic development within reach of rural communities across Nebraska, and reflective of the fact that there are differing economies in our state. And I think that we can work toward a common solution. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Baker.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. Beginning to hear from some rural senators now. And I might be a little closer to Lincoln than Senator Smith, but I'm certainly rural, rural, and rural. And you have to realize that we have a different economy in rural Nebraska. We had an auction of a home there in my home town the other day. The house brought \$19,000. A very nice, livable home, being lived in currently. Nice lot, good location, \$19,000. That's not uncommon in these small towns for houses to bring \$20,000. It doesn't cost a lot to move into these small towns from the front range and get a job. I appreciate what the... I guess I'd say the urban people are trying to do to help us. But we have experience on our side. We had the Rural Economic Opportunities, whatever the acronym is for it, out there, and nobody used it. There wasn't one company used it. And typically I hear from the Department of Economic Development, when I ask them, why didn't they use it, said, the wage requirements were too high for rural Nebraska. And I tend to believe director of DED and his people over there. It was never used. So here we go again. We're saying this is good legislation for rural Nebraska. It's feel-good legislation, to me, in that we might get it, if we continue to live with the committee amendment here rather than Senator Pederson's amendment, it feels good, but it's not going to help us any. So I'm looking at a more realistic approach. I look at these job... all these charts people have handed out. And I do admit that, you know, we only have four hundred and, say, twenty-five dollar an average weekly wage in 2001, which is