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March 26, 2003      LB 117

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Brown, you're recognized to open on advancement of LB 117.

SENATOR BROWN: Thank you, Mr. President and members. It's been suggested that I have a call of the house. (Laugh) LB 117 is a simple concept. It allows the State Treasurer to create a demonstration project and implementation plan for a centralized system for the receipt and deposit of funds paid by mail to the state of Nebraska. Technology will be purchased which will open the mail, capture a perfect image of each envelope and all contents, date stamp each piece, and print an identifier on each piece as directed by each agency. An electronic copy of all checks and other documents received will be provided to each agency in a format compatible with the agency's computer system. The paper copies of all documents received will be provided to the agencies if they wish to have them. Checks and money orders will be electronically deposited immediately. LB 117 is not only a simple concept, but an idea whose time has come. Payments sent to the state--taxes, tuition, license renewal--would be deposited electronically as soon as received, earning interest much more quickly than the current process. State employees now involved in some capacity with mail delivery, mail opening, mail processing, entering accounting information and related functions could be reassigned to functions that are more directly involved in the processing of whatever is involved. You are asking, well, this sounds great; what could the objections be? Well, many of the agencies, some of the agencies that have been the most up-to-date in changing their business practices, have already invested a lot of money upgrading their technology and are concerned that this would duplicate work that has already been done. And I would point to two agencies that I think have done as much as any agencies in their technology--the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the Department of Revenue--and I applaud them having made the investments and restructuring their work practices. I would respond that none of this will be disturbed. The technology used in the centralized receipting and deposit system will allow for an interface and an integration with existing software and will allow it to happen much more quickly. The cost, and in the amendment that will be provided, that we'll talk about a little