

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

April 25, 2003      LB 332

about claims here for the same injury...in two or three different states. For example, you may be able to file in the state where you live. Or if you work in a different state from where you live, you may be able to file in the state where you worked. Or if you were traveling in a third state someplace and happened to be injured on the road, you may be able to file that claim in any one of three states, including the one in which you were injured. Obviously, or at least I hope obviously to you, you should not be able to recover more than once by filing in more than one state. And just as obviously, I would hope, you should not be allowed to clog the judicial system by making multiple claims. An efficient and a fair judicial system ordinarily requires that you get one bite of the apple. In other words, the long established judicial doctrine that's usually applied, in particular if you're dealing with situations that are entirely within one state, is a doctrine called *res judicata*, which basically means "the matter is decided." And that means that once your case has been heard and once it's gone through the appeals, whatever appeals you may have, court of appeals, state supreme court, and once it's gone through the appeals, you can't come back in and file the same claim again and further tax judicial resources trying to get a rehearing on the same claim. So what does this bill do? This bill...it's before you as it came out of the Business and Labor Committee. The most controversial section of the four sections of the bill was removed by the committee, and remains removed in this amendment. So it does now basically three things. It says that if an employee benefits pursuant to the laws of another state, and if the employee's petition or complaint is dismissed, that is, if they file in another state and their complaint is dismissed, and if it is dismissed after hearing it on its merits, not on any procedural thing or technical consideration, but if it's heard on its merits in another state and you lose, you cannot come back and file the same claim in Nebraska. You could come to Nebraska in the first instance. That's always your choice. That choice is never taken away. But if you choose to go someplace else and file your claim and you lose on the merits, you cannot come back to Nebraska and file a second time on the same claim. The second thing that it does is to say, with respect to somebody who has filed in Nebraska, that if you then proceed to file in a second state, the proceedings in