

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

April 29, 2003 LB 407

now, and I don't think that's going to happen and I don't, in good conscience, think I can do that either. But on the other hand, there are some very good reasons for doing something about this issue. And I was just thinking to myself, I just read in the paper recently that there were maybe 200 teachers in the state of Nebraska that were rified. Now rified means reduce or reduction in force, doesn't necessarily mean that those 200 teachers have been fired, but they're given notice in case they need to be fired. We got public school teachers who are going to be without jobs, whose families are either going to be without income or without part of their income, who may have to move from their communities. I just read a story about one teacher down in a small school in the southeastern part of the state who is a terrific dynamite science teacher, but she is going to move because other people in her school are being released perhaps and it's just...it's becoming harder and harder to main the quality of...maintain the quality of education in that school. So I would ask each of you to think about, do you have school teachers in your districts who are going to lose their jobs because we're cutting state aid to education? Maybe not. Maybe some of you are lucky and you're not going to go through that, but others of you are, and there may be more than one or two or three teachers who are going to lose their jobs. Public education is our responsibility and we have a fabulous education system in the state of Nebraska. I feel for the teachers in our state who have felt under so much pressure over the last few years and are feeling even more pressure this year because of the state of our budget and the uncertainty about it. And I think a lot of them have had questions about why we haven't been dealing with the budget earlier, and I think most of them have been educated in the process by now. But there's a lot of uncertainty out there and a lot of people putting off decisions until they know exactly what's going to happen to them, and it's a really difficult situation for everybody. Not only is it difficult for the teachers, it's difficult for the administrators. It's going to be difficult for the children who are going to be, instead of classrooms of 24 students, they're going to be 28 or there's going to be 30 or there are going to be 32 students in those classrooms, and their learning situations, their learning environment is not going to be as good as it is now. We have a terrific school system in Nebraska