

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

January 23, 2004 LB 304

on January 13 of last year, referred to the Judiciary Committee. That committee reports the bill to General File with no committee amendments.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Synowiecki, you're recognized to open on LB 304.

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. Mr. President, members of the Legislature, LB 304 is the Peace Officer Employer-Employee Relations Act. It is an act that would provide due process rights to Nebraska peace officers investigated by their employers for conduct that may result in administrative sanctions. These rights would not apply to any criminal investigations. By passing LB 304, Nebraska would join 23 other states that currently have some form of a law enforcement officer's bill of rights. The states in the 8th Circuit that have implemented this legislation are Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri, and Minnesota. Police officers from across the state ask for your help in providing very basic due process rights when administrative investigations are undertaken. Given the critically unique duties and responsibilities of police officers within our society, the fact that they are charged with the duty to search, arrest, and detain, they are exposed, more so than any other profession, to unsubstantiated allegations of misconduct. There are 93 sheriff's departments in Nebraska, and only 23 of the 93 have over 10 officers on their departments. Only 10 of the 93 have formal employment contracts that incorporate an officer's bill of rights. There are 200 city police departments in Nebraska, and only 48 of the 200 have over 10 officers on their departments, and only 27 have employment contracts. LB 304 seeks to set a statewide benchmark standard for all law enforcement agencies across the board, to ensure that police officers receive procedurally fair treatment in administrative investigations. Thank you, Senator Cudaback. And I believe I have an amendment that essentially replaces the bill, and hopefully we can consider that amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Synowiecki. (Visitors introduced.) Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, I have a series of amendments