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February 12, 2004 LB 834, 858, 963

committee priority bills. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, the first bill on General File this morning, LB 963. It's a bill by Senator Vrtiska. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 9, referred to the Government Committee for public hearing, advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM2348, Legislative Journal page 434.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Vrtiska. Senator Vrtiska, open on your bill.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. The Government Committee combined three bills that I had introduced--LB 834, LB 858, and LB 963--into one bill, which is LB 963. LB 963, as amended, includes extending the protection of the federal Servicemembers of the Civil Relief Act to Nebraska National Guard soldiers performing state active duty for 31 days or more. This legislation is being introduced primarily to limit the impact of state active duty for members called to service. LB 834 provides that an officer of enlisted person of the National Guard who is called to active duty in excess of 30 days at the request of the federal government, a state or other agency or entity is entitled to reimbursement for his or her privately purchased or employer provided health insurance, so that the state of Nebraska would be exempt from reimbursing that service man. LB 858 expands who is eligible to serve as Adjutant General; the Adjutant General to delegate his state authority to a Nebraska National Guard Officer when the Adjutant General is absent from the state and a Deputy Adjutant General has not been appointed. Also it would eliminate the Adjutant General's need to take leave while performing federal or state military duty related to his position as Director of the Nebraska Military Department. Suggested changes in statute make the appointment of a Deputy Adjutant General permissive rather than mandatory. That's what the three bills that are put into one bill; they all deal with the National Guard. They were all brought...came out of committee without any opposition and it was the committee's desire to combine these into one bill because they all deal with primarily the same subject. Therefore, I'd ask for the advancement of LB 963.