

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

March 18, 2004 LB 1089

we can, is the budget. And we've been waiting for the budget to come out. We delayed a little bit taking it up to give the committee every opportunity to do what they could do to fashion a budget that they could live with and recommend to us, and they've done that. And now that the bills are on the floor, and this is the opportunity for you and I to probe and discuss and rediscuss and amend, there is a suggestion that we ought to delay that to Select File and summarily pass the bills over to Select File. And if that's what the body feels they want to do, certainly you can do it, and I have no reason to believe the suggestions that are being made aren't being made in good faith. But I guess I'm concerned that the body take the appropriate time and attention on this budget because it's critical. It's critical that we do it so that you all don't have to come back, and I don't have to come back, a time or two between now and next January to fix it, or if we've done something wrong, or have forgotten something, or not gotten our priorities straight. We have spent many, many hours on some subjects on this floor, all of which are important to some people, but I would submit to you there's no subject more important that affects more people and their lives than this budget that we're on right now. And I have to be convinced by someone, and the proponents of the suggestion that we treat this as a consent calendar agenda, I have to be convinced that that's in the best interests of our work here and of the people of the state of Nebraska. And if I can be convinced of that, certainly I'll support it. But the idea, the suggestion that somehow we'll do a better job by just pulling our amendments, and there are committee amendments on many of these bill that change the bill substantially, to send that over and delay that discussion all to Select File, and that we all will take the time to analyze those amendments and decide how we feel about them and make suggestions to the committee so we're prepared to make decisions on Select File, I have to be made a believer of that. I can't feel the process will be enhanced. I can't feel that the public will feel...I mean, we've got to do our job, no matter what the public feels, and we will. But I can't sense the public is going to feel that we've given the attention to the most important subject that we're going to deal with in this session by spending a couple of hours on it and sending it over to Select File, hopefully to spend countless hours off the floor working on it in the meantime.