

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

January 13, 2005

you're going to have the preponderance of decision making and power. Where you have the most economic activity is where you're going to have the decision makers whose decisions will affect all of the state. This rural-urban split exists all over the country, and it is never going to be resolved. There will always be parts of a state like Nebraska which is going to be left in the dust. I read something in the paper the other day about a one-room school which apparently is also the only school in a district. And now they've got to pay \$15,000 in back taxes and penalties to the federal government, because they blundered in paying their taxes. So you've got a school district that comprises one building, which has one room, which has eight pupils. That's the kind of state Nebraska is, and I do not believe the same consideration should be given to anachronistic circumstances such as that, as will be given to districts that have many schools, many students, and really can qualify as what a school district ought to be, in my opinion. So others have different opinions, and we hash those things out on the floor of the Legislature. But we need to keep in mind what is going on in that area known as western or outstate Nebraska before we just start getting nostalgic and saying, well, they say they don't have this out there; they've got it in Omaha; give it to them out there. What Senator Smith and a lot of people from outstate Nebraska, and many of those who voted for term limits to get rid of me will not realize is that there is a charge on people's phone bill to help make telephone service available to outstate Nebraska. And that wasn't done by an outstate senator. It was not done by a farm sector senator. It was not done by a rural senator. It was done by the city slicker, namely moi, whom they hate. There was an entity designed to look into rural economic matters, and it was going to be abolished. And two urban senators got busy, especially me, but Senator Schimek played an important role in it, too, to prevent that abolition from occurring. When the Ag Committee was going to be abolished and the Chair of the Natural Resources Committee, which was a farm area senator, and the then-Chair of the Ag Committee, who was a farm area senator, had come together and weren't going to do anything about it, and I talked to both of them right near the front of the room, and I said, what are you going to do about this, they said, well, the train is on the track and we're not going to get run over. I said, now, you all are the ones