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FLOOR DEBATE

March 9, 2005 LB 217

Government Committee, advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments pending, Mr. President. (AM0278, Legislative Journal page 441.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Flood, you're recognized to open on LB 217.

SENATOR FLOOD: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I introduced LB 217 this year with the help of Senator Connealy, Senator Janssen, as well as Senators Cornett, Pahls, Smith, and Synowiecki. The single and most important purpose of LB 217 is to adopt the Public Facilities Construction and Finance Act, and to create an incentive for local governments to work together to avoid duplication of projects and facilities, thus, in the end, saving taxpayers money. I realize that there are already many outstanding examples of joint local government projects, where two political subdivisions come together and work well, and many programs across the state, from South Sioux, to Norfolk, to North Platte. Unfortunately, it is evident from the work done by the Nebraska Commission on Local Government Innovation and Restructuring, from 1996 to 2000, that most local governments throughout the state do not collaborate on joint building projects. We can all think about the many government projects and buildings in our districts which would perhaps have been better had they been jointly built to accommodate the common and multiple needs of more than one political subdivision. In my own district, I think about some of the smaller communities that have a maintenance shed for county vehicles and a maintenance shed for city or village vehicles. It seems to make sense to put everything under one roof. But as I've mentioned before in my testimony, political subdivisions don't have a history of working well together. LB 217 will create an incentive for local governments listed in AM0614 to work together to jointly finance and issue bonds for certain types of projects, without an election up front. I want to emphasize that 15 percent of registered voters could file a remonstrance petition to require an election before their local governing body, before they could...before that body could participate in such a joint project with other local governments. Not having an up-front election is the only incentive to LB 217. There are still requirements for notice