

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

March 9, 2005

LB 217

library right now, and I know if I did the same in Norfolk, there would be a line stacked deep down the hall of the library to use the Internet computers. We can't keep enough computers operating to satisfy the needs of the Norfolk Public Library patrons, because it's such a popular attraction in this electronic age. LB 217 would allow for the issuance of bonds and joint projects in publicly owned libraries across Nebraska, not to exceed \$250,000 for cities of the metropolitan or primary class; \$100,000 for counties, cities of the first class, and school districts, ESUs, and community colleges; and not to exceed \$50,000 for cities of the second class and villages. Imagine going to the library in Valparaiso, or maybe the library in Battle Creek or Madison or Newman Grove, and being able to access on-line the entire libraries found in Norfolk, Columbus, Northeast Community College, the Omaha Public Library. There's no end to the advantages of getting libraries to work together. Imagine for a second all of the different buildings you have in your district that could be done under one roof to improve services for citizens. Instead of going four places to pay a municipal water bill, and maybe, in some cases, a municipal electric bill, and maybe see the school district, or file a matter with a county court, you could go to one building, rather than four or five different buildings. There's a limitation of \$5 million on a joint building project. That does not build a Taj Mahal; \$5 million is a reasonable amount of money when public, political subdivisions, or joint agencies as we call them here, work together. It's also important to remember that the participating joint agencies, you know, public agencies that want to work jointly with another public agency, are also limited, when it comes to debt service, to 5 percent of their total restricted funds. Call your city administrator, call your county or your school district, and find out what they have for restricted funds. In many small communities that possibly have a \$1 million budget, \$800,000 of that, let's say, for instance, was restricted funds; 5 percent of that \$800,000 would be the limitation that they could participate when it comes to paying back these bonds. I really believe this is a proactive, innovative way to provide an incentive, a carrot rather than a stick, to get political subdivisions to work together. I urge you to support this bill. And for reference, I support the committee amendments that the Government Committee so diligently