April 5, 2005   LB 689

SENATOR CUDABACK PRESIDING

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Louden, would you respond?

SENATOR LOUDEN: Yes. Yes, I would.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR LOUDEN: The...Senator Raikes is right.   A co-op can
have Internet service with...in the state of Nebraska, and not
be in any jeopardy of any laws. On the other hand, there were
several public power districts that were giving Internet
service.   In fact, at the present time, we're buying satellite
service from a public power district out in western Nebraska.
So it is being done, whether there's skirting of the law or not.
But when no one else provides it, why, the public utilities have
been able to do it.   Does that answer your question, Senator
Beutler?

SENATOR BEUTLER: That's very helpful, Senator.   Not to the
degree that we'd probably all like to have the question
answered.   I'm looking forward to the discussion in that regard
that will surely be upon us in time. But with that, Senator
Cudaback, I would return what small amount of my time remains.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the
body.   It seems like it's been a long time since I've been at
the microphone. But I do want to share with you some of the
background, and hope that some of these handouts that I might go
through and point out some of the things that we are trying to
accomplish. One question that has been talked about, what about
these contracts?   The contracts, is my understanding, that the
schools...that those other companies own the equipment and the
service.   So when the contracts expire, they no longer have
either.   So they will become disconnected. And I think that we
all will agree that certainly distance education is extremely
important across the state, not only in our rural schools, but
also, as Senator Jensen was talking about, for health, for the
telehealth issues.   And what the task force is really aimed to