

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

April 6, 2005

LB 548

the transfer of the Nebraska Health Care Cash Fund from the Nebraska Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund and the Nebraska Medicaid Intergovernmental Trust Fund, \$50,000 annually, and that it would be...to be offset by the amount of the unobligated balance in the Nebraska Health Care Cash Fund. The bill limits to \$50 million the amount that may be appropriated or transferred from the Nebraska Health Care Cash Fund in any fiscal year. I might mention that in the last couple years of our budget crisis, we took unexpected...unexpended dollars, matter of fact, last year we took \$17 million, that went to other items in our budget. And, yes, I voted for some of those, but this would prevent that in the future; that only that if those dollars are unexpended they would stay in the cash fund, generate more interest. And so this fund would last, I think, into "infamy." The bill outright repeals Section 71-7601, 71-7604, 71-7609, and 71-7610. The bill contains the emergency clause. And there is one committee amendment, and what that committee amendment does, I'll tell you right now, is that it will increase the \$50 million to \$52 million. And when we passed this bill back in '98, we said that we would transmit, or take from the \$50 million, \$10 million a year for research, going to the University of Nebraska Med Center, Creighton University, UNL, and also Boys Town. And when we started in 1998, we conservatively said that that \$50 million perhaps could grow maybe to a larger amount, and of course then we hit the budget crisis and there was no opportunity. Also, when we passed LB 692, we said it will be...we would give \$10 million a year for the first two years to research, \$12 million for the next two years, \$14 million thereafter. Well, we never got to the \$12 million. What this would do, it would increase the \$50 million to \$52 million a year annually. In other words, we would increase by \$2 million, so it will be a total of \$12 million for research, and that is what the amendment does. I'll...but I'll, Mr. President, I will go into the amendment, if I may.

SENATOR CUDABACK: You're recognized to open on the committee amendments, as Chairman.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you. The committee amendment, AM0735, adds the operative date of July 15, 2005. It raises that