

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

April 20, 2005 LB 673A

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I still...it's been a motion to reconsider it. I'm still against the bracket motion for the middle of May, which I don't think will solve any problems. I wanted to...would like to point out that Senator Chambers mentioned that one of the senators indicated how he was taking care of his prairie dogs and whatever it is, and that's where you have to pay attention. That's an eradication program, is what they're doing. That's when people are doing it on their own; that's what it's all about. This here type deal we're trying to do a management program, and you have counties that can go in, probably hire a specialist if need be. But they do go ahead and find ways to manage them so that there is areas where there can be prairie dogs and the ecosystem can be protected, and for some of the animals that do make a living off of them, not that they have to have the prairie dogs' colonies to make livings. There's spotted owls and some of those that use the badger holes. We have spotted owls on our...ground owls on our ranch, so we...they don't necessarily have to have prairie dog burrows to live, there are other places they live. When you discuss some of these, they usually get mixed up with...sometimes they're called squirrels, sometime they call them prairie dogs. But there is a difference. Your 13-line ground squirrel is a different animal that's out there on the prairie. They live in the same areas that the prairie dogs do. We have those on our landscape, on our ranch. They usually don't bother us. Those are something that bothered the farmers in areas that did a lot of agricultural work, corn ground or something like that, so that they nearly disappeared from the areas that have farmed. I doubt if you'll see very many ground squirrels in the eastern part of Nebraska where it's heavily tilled. They're mostly out there in the western part, where we've been able to manage those and allowed them to survive and live. And usually a ground squirrel is the first animal you see come out of hibernation in the spring. I'm sure Senator Chambers has never been out there to see anything like that happen, so I question when he's giving these statistics on what should be done with the animals and what should not be done. I don't think he has any first-hand knowledge on it. He's probably going from what he's read or what he's been told. On the other hand, there is a problem out