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

April 28, 2005 LB 645

protections of their industry without some of the private sector issues that should be applied as well. What concerns me a great What we need across Nebraska is more investment. investment in the infrastructure, whether it's a wireless tower which is really the thing of the future. I don't believe, and I could be wrong, but I don't believe that investments in upgrading the power lines is where the future stands with telecommunications. I talked to a ham radio operator about That's something that is oftentimes left out, but the ham radio operator's shortwave radio or whatever you want to call them, they have strong objections because of the broadband over power line not being a refined mechanism for communication. telecommunications. I think it's important to note, although I don't want to shut it out as some people would call it, that BPL is not really a wave of the future. I think it's tempting to it because we already have an installed infrastructure across the state, but it needs much more than that. over power line is really only effective in urban areas, and that's not where we need the services. We need the services out in the rural areas. I mean, I have to point out that Brashear's device he can enjoy in the urban areas of Lincoln and I can't enjoy the Blackberry device in rural Nebraska. I hope to someday because I think it would make life easier, but nonetheless, it is an issue that I don't think will ever go away because technology is advancing so rapidly. But if technology is advancing so rapidly, we need that investment and we need to encourage the investment so that the marketplace can do its is what has gotten us to this point so far with work. telecommunications is the marketplace, and we need to encourage that to be carried forward. It's interesting, I was trying to read some of the handouts here that gave a list of subsidies,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR SMITH: ...outlined the subsidies of the what I believe are called independent telephone companies. I think we need to look at that. And I'm not saying reduce the subsidies. What I think has worked across Nebraska, especially in rural areas, are some of these subsidies that have been applied through the private sector. These independent telephone companies, and I point to Hemingford because it's closest to my home, has