

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

April 28, 2005 LB 645

and federal coffers. We also, at the direction of this body, collect the E-911 fee. We don't keep it; we remit it back. We also collect, according to the Federal Communications Commission, a Universal Service Fund fee. According to this body, we also collect the Nebraska Universal Service Fund fee. We also collect, at the direction of this body, a hearing-impaired fee. And those are not...I mean, it drives me personally crazy that local telecommunication companies are the tax collector for the state, the federal, and local entities. But we are. Don't confuse that with the basic level of service, local dial tone, local other telecommunications services that are provided. And maybe I imagined this, but I thought I heard Senator Chambers call us scoundrels and not good corporate citizens. In argument to that, and in fact, the company I work for is a very small company; again, 12,000 local access lines. And corporately, we contribute hundreds of thousands of dollars to local--every year--to local organizations, not-for-profits, and we are involved in the community, not just through contributions, but our people are involved, as well. And you'll find that throughout the state. I'm defending communication companies because they were challenged.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR MINES: The same thing can be said for public power, as well. They are good corporate citizens. I don't think that...I don't think...that's not what this is about. This discussion, this amendment, and this bill are very basic. You've heard if from half a dozen speakers already. Should public entities compete with private entities, when the private sector has competition already, and the needs and the wants of people in this state are, by and large, being fully served? I don't think public entities should compete in the private industry, like I don't think private industry should be allowed to compete with our public power friends and neighbors. So thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR JANSSEN PRESIDING

SENATOR JANSSEN: Thank you, Senator Mines. Mr. Clerk, do you have announcements?