

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

May 9, 2005

LB 748

which approach is the best. So that's my take on it. And if it's right, good. And if it's not right, so be it; you'll decide what to do with these two bills. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Schimek. (Visitors introduced.) On with discussion of the motion to recommit. Senator Redfield, followed by Senator Baker.

SENATOR REDFIELD: Thank you, Senator Cudaback, members of the body. We are debating a bill that the sponsor has just told us he doesn't understand and is not expert in all of the details and technicalities of the gas wars. I served on the Urban Affairs Committee for four years, I was Vice Chair of that committee, and I can tell you that this has been an ongoing issue. And it is very technical, and it is very difficult. And I don't know that any of us can claim to be a thorough expert in this area. We're also debating a bill for which the committee chair has assured us we are not going to find the answer. And he is actually telling us it might be wise for us to recommit it to the committee. So we're spending a great deal of time talking about a bill that none of us, I believe, is convinced is the answer. And so I am going to support the motion to recommit, so that perhaps the committee can take some time and look at this issue in more depth. There was an argument made that this was the closest we could get to a free market. Not so. Because, in fact, the tax structure within the public sector and the private sector are not identical and, therefore, that does not follow the principles of a free market. We also have the issue of eminent domain. And as long as that authority exists, we know that we're not in a free market situation. And actually, this bill, I believe, would remove the provisions that this body carefully put in place in order to safeguard the property rights in this state. And I believe that those would be jeopardized by this bill. And perhaps the committee would have some time to look at that issue. Senator Friend also talked about this being a better deal for the ratepayers. And as someone who is serviced by Metropolitan Utilities Districts, I'm very appreciative of the rates which we receive in the Omaha area. But I can tell you that that's not the rationale for any public policy in this state, because if it were, we certainly could make a case for taking over all of the grocery stores,