

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

May 19, 2005

LB 673

about 60 counties or more that have no prairie dogs at all and no problems with them. There are some areas, such as, I think it's Doane College, around Crete, that has a small prairie dog town, and they control that thing and keep it into their area. And my understanding is, they use it for some type of educational purposes and study of the animals. So this isn't something...and that's the reason it's been called a management plan, is because we hope that there will be ways that these things will not be eradicated. Now, up until here in the early nineties or sometime, the prairie dog in Nebraska was supposed to be eradicated by the 1st of November. And, I mean, this was something that just got them all. So we haven't...that, of course, isn't exactly the proper way to handle wildlife. There are areas where they're not bothering anyone, and consequently we usually leave them alone. On our ranch where we are, we have badgers. We don't have prairie dogs, because we have badgers. But ordinarily, the badgers that are up in the hills and areas where they don't bother that much, we let them have their time and go about it. So until they start coming down in the chicken house or something like that, why, there's usually not a problem. So this is the same thinking on the prairie dogs. If they aren't a problem, then why bother them? And...but we do need something to coordinate the management plan with the Forest Service in some of the areas out in the western end of the state, where there are huge losses in some of the...when we had such dry weather last few summers, and the rangeland has been devastated by them. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Loudon. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, what this bill really does, in effect, is to put the burden on the individual landowner to manage--I'll use Senator Loudon's word--to manage prairie dogs. And instead of just using pronouns, like his property or her property, and it could get mixed up, I will designate the property owners by a letter. Property owner A alleges that there are prairie dogs on her property because property owner B has prairie dogs which have migrated from property owner B's land to property owner A's land. Property owner A is going to try to have property owner B saddled with the cost of removing the animals from property