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LB 645

Pedersen. Senator Dwite Pedersen. And, Senator Pedersen, I know you won't mind me interrupting you, but I forgot to announce an important person this morning visiting, and it happens to be your grandson. (Visitor introduced.) On with discussion. Senator Pedersen.

SENATOR Dw. PEDERSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. I am pleased that the people have come together on an amendment, to take a look at this. I'm not against technology, either. But the reason I signed on to LB 645 as soon as I had read the bill, with Senator Brashear, was I have a real problem with public entities going in competition with private business. Since I've been in the Legislature and since I've had my name on the ballot running for politics, the thing I hear more from any...than anything else from the constituency out there is, why can't you run government like a business? Well, it's because we're not a business, and it's run by bureaucracies. And we look at the public power, which we have very good and decent public power in the state of Nebraska, and we look at the public utilities. We have MUD in Omaha. I think they serve us well. But I have a terrible fear of these government agencies wanting to grow and get bigger and saying they need to grow, and in the meantime take over private business, and before long we have a monopoly owned by the people, run by elected officials who hire bureaucracies, and that bureaucracy comes back every year and asks for more and more and more money. And that happens because they want to get bigger and bigger and bigger. That scares the dickens out of me. Free enterprise and competition, in all the studies I've had and watched, is what keeps prices down. Monopolies run them up, and I don't see any difference in a public-owned monopoly than it would any other monopoly. When they get so big, they have us. And these bureaucracies, especially with term limits, get more and more powerful, and we are more and more vulnerable. That's why LB 645 was very appetizing to me, in my thoughts and in my training and my experiences. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Pedersen. Senator Baker, followed by Senator Preister.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I don't