

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

January 11, 2006 LB 454

debate. I hope we can have a productive debate on LB 454 this session and get this bill passed. We've been over this bill for several years, and a clear majority of the body supports it. I believe a clear majority of all Nebraskans support this bill, and we need to be diligent in passing this legislation. Every day I receive calls, letters, and e-mail messages thanking me for carrying this bill. Before we get too far into the debate, I want to acknowledge the hard work of the body up to this point. When I decided to bring a bill on concealed carry, I did not want to ignore the work that had previously been done. LB 265 from last biennium was a thoughtful work; it combined the efforts of several senators, including Senators Schellpeper, Janssen, Tyson, and many others. The bill was also thoroughly examined by the Judiciary Committee under the direction of Speaker Brashear. After LB 265 was advanced, work was done by this body during floor debate. This year it was amended, and I've included those amendments in the legislation. We have the current committee amendment, which has further improved the bill by adding the State Patrol in lieu of the county sheriffs to the training, review, and approval process. I also want to add that the NSP will not be tied up with the development and delivery of the training courses. The Patrol will simply define regulations and procedures and approve training courses that meet their requirements. Finally, I listened to both the supporters and the opponents. I met with colleagues, and I met with law enforcement. After careful consideration, I made the decision to make the State Patrol the issuing agency. That is the primary change in this bill, from LB 265, and it is a positive one. This will ensure that we will have a uniform, statewide application of the concealed handgun permit. And I do want to especially commend the Patrol for their input and also for being progressive and accommodating. From day one the Patrol has told me, we can do this, no problem. I appreciate the positive foresight from our leading law enforcement agency. This bill is financially self-sustaining and fiscally responsible. LB 454 will provide for Nebraskans who qualify for and receive the necessary permit the right to carry concealed handguns. The bill requires applicants to successfully complete a safety course prescribed by the State Patrol, to obtain the permit application materials, be fingerprinted, and submit the application to the Patrol, which is the issuing agency under the