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LB 796, 853

85 feet overall length, and 81 feet, 6 inches in South Dakota. Any changes in Nebraska statutes, without first obtaining a federal waiver, could have jeopardized our federal funding. I've been working on this issue since December of 2000, before I actually got down here into office, with a constituent of mine who is a custom harvester. In 2002 the Nebraska State Highway Commission passed a resolution requesting an exemption in the highway bill for long combination vehicles in Nebraska, specifically those used to haul wheat harvesting equipment. A copy of that resolution was sent to our federal representatives. My constituent continued to work with the federal delegation, my office, and Senator Baker's office. Last year Congressman Osborne agreed to offer the language for the Nebraska exemption, and this past summer SAFETEA-LU was passed on the federal level. It included language that specifically authorizes Nebraska to allow the operation of a truck, tractor, and two trailers, or semitrailers, if the length of the property-carrying units do not exceed 81 feet, 6 inches, and such combination is used only to transport equipment utilized by custom harvesters under contract to agricultural producers to harvest wheat, soybeans, or milo during the harvest months, as defined by the state of Nebraska. Therefore, I've introduced LB 796 to place the federal language into state statute, authorizing the increase in length allowances for custom harvesters. The bill also includes the definition of "property-carrying unit," and defines harvest months as April through November. LB 796 also changes the length limitation from 75 feet to 97 feet for a driveway saddlemount vehicle transporter combination, due to a change in federal requirements. I urge the adoption of this amendment, so that state statute can be changed in accordance with the federal exemption.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you. You've heard the opening on AM2296 by Senator Cunningham. Open for discussion. Senator Baker, followed by Senator Chambers.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. Senator Cunningham explained this very well. His amendment is LB 796. It's long overdue, and the reason we hadn't acted on it before is we did have to have federal waiver in order to be able to adopt this amendment of Senator Cunningham's. And it