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

March 24, 2006 LB 1222

going to cover all the costs. Seventy cents on the...surcharge on the wireless, the cell phones, plus lowering it to fifty cents in metropolitan cities, being in Omaha, is not going to cover all the costs, so we have to provide for some flexibility to the Public Service Commission to sort of pick and choose. Section 25 provides immunity to the PSC. This also...there's included in AM2745, Section 25, I believe it is, is stricken, so that we have the same immunity statutes as we do currently under landline communications. With that, Senator, Mr. President, I believe there is going to be discussion here. I do have some other comments, I guess. I know that it's been difficult for some of the counties to get moving on this. said we have seven counties that are not up to enhanced 911 after all these years. We have some issues with accountability, where the funding is actually ... where the funds that are collected are actually going. The committee amendment does have the consolidation language. It's not forced consolidation. I might point out to those senators not familiar with the bill and those in the rural areas, you don't have to consolidate. says, two contiguous counties or 5,000 people within the PSAP area; it doesn't say you have to consolidate these counties, but if you don't, you're not going to be eligible for cost reimbursement. I feel that's very important because we have, I believe, 82 PSAPs now across the state. Quite frankly, we can't afford to fund 82 PSAPs; there's no way. And there are many, many counties already merged, combined out There's, in fact, I wouldn't say a majority, but there's a lot of counties. As I mentioned, Scottsbluff-Gering PSAP is through Scotts Bluff County, Banner County, and a big part of Dawes Region 26 serves, I think, eight counties. southern part of the Sandhills is all one PSAP. It goes on and There are other examples of interlocal agreements. So, to allay those fears you have about forced consolidation, you don't have to consolidate, but you're not going to be eligible for cost reimbursement from the Public Service Commission through this surcharge fund. It does increase the surcharge from 70 cents... Senator Engel has been through these issues. Senator Bromm, I believe, is the one that at that time was chairing the committee. We have to raise them 70 cents...to 70 cents, it seems like is the minimum, with the exception of metropolitan Omaha.