

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate March 26, 2025
Rough Draft

ARCH: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber for the 50th day of the One Hundred Ninth Legislature, First Session. Our chaplain for today is Senator Hughes. Please rise.

HUGHES: Thank you, Chairman. OK. Gracious and loving God, we come before you today seeking your wisdom and guidance and peace as we open this session of the Nebraska Legislature. We acknowledge the weight of responsibility placed upon these leaders entrusted to serve the people of this great state with integrity, justice, and compassion. Lord, we ask that you unite us in purpose, helping us to set aside personal divisions and political differences in pursuit of the common good. In a time when it is easy to focus on what separates us, remind us of what binds us together, the shared hope for a stronger Nebraska where families thrive, communities and opportunity is available to all. Grant these legislators the patience to listen, the humility to learn, and the courage to act in ways that reflect the needs and values of the people that they serve. May their work be guided by wisdom, fairness, and commitment to policies that uplift the majority of Nebraskans. Strengthening education, health care, agriculture, infrastructure, and the well-being of every citizen. Bless this chamber with your presence, O God. And may the words spoken and the decisions made here be filled with grace and truth. Let this place be a place of productive dialog where common ground is found and progress is made. May the work done in this session be a testament to the power of collaboration and the pursuit of justice for all. We place this session in all her ser-- all who serve in your hands, trusting in your wisdom and grace. Amen.

ARCH: I recognize Senator Jacobson for the Pledge of Allegiance.

JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Please join me in the pledge. I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ARCH: Thank you. I call to order the 50th day of the One Hundred Ninth Legislature, first session. Senators, please record your presence. Roll call.

ARCH: Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: There's quorum present, Mr. President.

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ARCH: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Are there any corrections for the Journal?

CLERK: I have no corrections this morning, sir.

ARCH: Thank you. Are there any messages, reports or announcements?

CLERK: There are, Mr. president. First, communication from the governor. Engrossed LB116, LB223, LB297e and LB373 were received in my office on March 20, 2025 and signed on March 25, 2025. These bills were delivered to the Secretary of State on March 26, 2025. Signed, Sincerely, Jim Pillen, governor. Additionally, a committee report on the gubernatorial appointment of Katie Thurber as Commissioner of the Department of Labor. Amendments to be printed from Senator Holdcroft to LB113, and a new LR, LR86. That will be referred to the Executive Board. That's all I have at this time, Mr. President.

ARCH: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. An announcement this morning, our, our Doctor of the Day is, is from my district, Dr. Hans Dethfiles from Omaha, family physician of the day. Thank you for being here. While the Legislature is in session and capable of transacting business, I propose to sign and do hereby sign LR17. Colleagues, just as a reminder that the, that the queue is going to clear when we go to the first item on the agenda, that has not yet been announced. I just wanted to let you know. Mr. Clerk, first item.

CLERK: Mr. president, LB415, General File. Senator, when the Legislature left, the bill pending was a motion to indefinitely postpone pursuant to Rule 6, Section 3(f) from Senator McKinney. That vote had failed. Senator Dungan had moved to reconsider the vote on that motion. That's all I have at this time.

ARCH: Colleagues, it's been several days since we began debate on this bill, so I'm going to ask for a couple refreshers. We'll start with Senator Ballard for a refresher on the bill. One minute, Senator Ballard.

BALLARD: Thank you, Mr. President. LB415, which we resumed last week, I just want to reiterate, LB415 is a clean up bill. This is a product of a working group between the business community, the Department of Labor, and employment law experts. LB415 has three main points. It adds owner operators and independent contractors to the list of exempted individuals from paid time off. The initiative, it seeks to preserve paid time, existing paid time off programs that exceed the minimum that the initiative sets out, and it, and it, and it clarifies

how paid time off is to be paid out by employment separation. So with that, those are the three main points. This is a clean up bill, LB415, but I look forward to the conversation today. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: The motion before the body is the reconsideration of an IPP motion. And I would call on Senator McKinney, you had the original IPP motion, I would ask if you would give a one minute refresher on your opposition. Thank you.

McKINNEY: Thank you, Mr. President. My original opposition is honestly just in the spirit of just reminding the body that, as stated last week, our constituents wanted paid sick leave more than they wanted a majority of us here, and I don't think that should go without thought. I don't think we should not think about that when we discuss this bill today, because I think it's very important to keep with the spirit of the voters and make sure that we don't go against their wants and needs. Because the body didn't pass paid sick leave, the voters did. And we should make sure that we respect the second house if we're going to call them the second house. And because of that, I brought this motion just to remind everybody that the second house wanted this more than they wanted most of us here, if not all. So thank you.

ARCH: Turning to the queue. Senator Hunt, you're recognized to speak.

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning colleagues. Good morning Nebraskans. I rise today, you know, in agreement with my colleague, Senator McKinney, who has made brilliant points on his opposition to this measure. And, you know, I rise to join him in opposition. Nebraskans deserve to have their voices respected, and last November, our constituents spoke overwhelmingly in favor of paid sick leave for workers. Nearly 75% of Nebraskan voters approved the Healthy Families and Workplaces Act. And not a single legislative district had less than 63% support. And they supported this for a simple reason, colleagues. No one should have to choose between earning a paycheck and caring for their health. Yet here we are, just months later, considering an amendment soon, a couple measures down in the queue that would undermine the new law, and frankly overturn much of what new voters-- or what voters asked us to put, put in place. It carves out whole groups of workers from coverage, waters down enforcement, and it's an attempt to rewrite the voters' decisions to take away benefits Nebraskans overwhelmingly demanded. So what I want to speak about is AM722, which is not on the board yet, but I want-- I know that we are kind of in a standoff? That's too strong of a where it's

not the right word, but the, the conversation or the, the conflict that we're having is are we going to get to that amendment or are we not? And it's my intention to speak about that amendment before we get to it, if we are going to get to it, because I want colleagues to think about what that amendment means during our time for extended debate today. AM722 guts key parts of the paid sick leave law. It cuts out entire groups of workers from coverage, it waters down enforcement, and it strips away protections that make the law meaningful. It's not a tweak or a clarification, it's not refining, it's not a cleanup. It's an attempt to rewrite the voters' decisions, to take away benefits that Nebraskans overwhelmingly demanded. So let me highlight what this amendment would do and why it's such a step backward. First, it exempts businesses with ten or fewer employees from providing paid sick leave at all. Colleagues, that's a huge exemption. Nebraska's law was supposed to cover every private employer, whether you have one employee or 100, with reasonable adjustments for size. Voters understood that even if you work at a tiny diner or a small town grocery store, you should be able to earn a few sick days. But under this amendment, if your workplace has ten or fewer people, you're out of luck. Zero guaranteed sick days. Think about who that leaves out. The waitress at a family run cafe with six employees. No paid sick leave. A farmhand at a dairy farm. None. A cashier at a gas station. None. These Nebraskans would lose the very benefit that we voted to give them. That's not what the people asked for. In fact, they explicitly wanted all workers protected, not just those at big companies. So why should a nurse's aide at a small eldercare home have fewer rights than one at a large hospital? This amendment would create an unfair double standard. It would rob thousands of sick leave that they should be earning. And second, the amendment excludes certain types of employees altogether, notably seasonal and temporary agricultural workers and any workers under 16. Colleagues, these exceptions are as troubling as they are cruel. Our agricultural workers, many of whom are seasonal, do backbreaking work to put food on our tables. They get injured. They get ill. They're human. They deserve the basic dignity of a paid sick day if they need it. This amendment tells them no, not you, you don't get this protection. And it's the same of our youngest workers. The teens busing tables or stocking shelves. If a 15-year-old catches a nasty virus, do we really want them handling food at a fast food restaurant because they can't afford to stay home? Excluding these groups isn't just morally wrong, it undermines public health. Illness doesn't check someone's age or what type of job they have. A sick farm worker can spread the flu just as easily as any other worker, maybe more so in

the close quarters of seasonal housing. A sick teenager in a restaurant can get other customers sick. And this amendment invites more people to work sick and that endangers all of us. It's no surprise that in states with paid sick leave, workplaces saw an 11% lower rate of flu infection in the first year because people could actually afford to stay home.

ARCH: Time, Senator.

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Dungan, you're recognized to speak.

DUNGAN: Thank you, Mr. President, and good morning, colleagues. I do rise in favor of my motion to reconsider, and I would encourage your green vote to, to reconsider that vote so we can get back to the motion of indefinitely postpone. I appreciate the situation or the, I guess, conversation that we find ourselves in here, because I think it's a really good delineation of, of two separate things, and Senator Hunt touched on this. With LB415, the underlying bill, we have what I believe has been represented to me as a compromise. There was a lot of work and effort that went into LB415, both from folks in the business community who are affected by the paid sick leave as an employer. And then there was also negotiations and conversations that went into LB415 on behalf of some of the folks that worked on the paid sick leave ballot initiative and advocated for this on behalf of the employee. So the underlying bill with LB415, I think, represents an actual compromise on some of the cleanup and clarifications that folks have asked for as it pertains to the paid sick leave ballot initiative. In his opening, Senator Ballard indicated that LB415 is a cleanup bill. I don't necessarily disagree with that. I think that LB415 in its original iteration, along with some of the committee amendments, is clarification and cleanup. I do think, however, that when we start to look towards other parts of the committee amendment, represented mostly by, I believe, LB698 for my colleague, Senator Strommen, we start to see what I would say are policy changes. And I've spoken with Senator Strommen about this off the mic, and I think that is where the real disagreement about the committee amendment comes into play. I think when you have a ballot initiative that hasn't even gone into effect yet, it is completely acceptable to, as a Legislature, maybe make some tweaks or clarifications to ensure that we properly execute the will of the voters and do so in a way that effectuates the underlying goal of the ballot initiative. And as I said on the mic before, there are certain ballot initiatives that sort

of invite that from the Legislature, that sort of ask the Legislature to make an effort to, to further flesh out what's been requested. And a good example of that is the medical marijuana ballot initiative, where the Legislature necessarily was asked to come in and create some rules and parameters around it. We do not need to do that in the same way with the paid sick leave ballot initiative. And my concern is that there are major components of the committee amendment that don't simply make tweaks or clarifications, but rather completely undermine the will of the voters and walk back the specifics of what was passed by the people. I anticipate that we're going to talk about that more today, and I think that Senator Hunt touched on some major components of those. But chief among them is this idea that we're now going to exclude certain people from the requirements to be covered with paid sick leave, and that we're going to carve out a large number of businesses who don't have to abide by what's being required by the paid sick leave ballot initiative. Now, I understand the concerns that some of my, my colleagues have raised with me about what they're worried about. But my understanding is that a lot of the research that's been done in areas where these paid sick leave policies have been passed has indicated that there's actually been a significant economic boon to businesses by ensuring that people have this paid sick leave. Multiple studies nationwide have shown that when individuals have paid sick leave, that actually increases the money that they have in their pocket, which is then more likely to have a macroeconomic impact with that money going back into local businesses. Upwards of \$1 billion, you can see nationwide, start to cycle through the economy when folks actually have their money back in their pocket. In addition to that, you actually see businesses not having to expend quite as much money in the training of new individuals when they ensure that their employees can stick around with paid sick leave and not have to leave their business. And so I do believe that all said and done, the paid sick leave that was passed by the voters not only has a positive impact, obviously, on the ability of employees to continue to work and keep a job and put food on the table and have the dignity of a job. But it also does not have the negative impacts that some people have expressed with regards to local businesses. So again, colleagues, I do encourage your support for the motion to reconsider. I would encourage your support on the motion to indefinitely postpone assuming that we're ultimately going to get to this committee amendment, which does, at the end of the day, undermine the will of the people. And I do believe that what LB415 represents is true compromise. And I think that we need to honor the work of those who worked to make that bill happen. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Holdcroft, you are recognized to speak.

HOLDCROFT: Question.

ARCH: The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do, the question is, shall debates cease? All those in favor, vote. Senator Cavanaugh, please state your point.

M. CAVANAUGH: I would like to know why the president is not using their authority bestowed upon them in the rules to determine if there's been full and fair debate and why it's being put to a vote of the people instead.

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh. This, this obviously is a complex, a complex debate, multiple facets. And due to that, there's not going to be a ruling of the chair, but it's going to be, it's going to be on the body's decision as to whether to cease debate, which is allowed under the rules.

M. CAVANAUGH: It is allowed under the rules. That wasn't really an answer as to why you're not using your authority. And why is this author-- why does this authority even currently exist in our rules, if it's not going to be utilized during this legislative debate. There's only been two individuals in a very long queue of people who have spoken this morning. And historically, when that is the case, the presiding officer makes the determination about full and fair debate. And that has been the historical use of the rules. And I would like to know why that precedent is being put aside this morning, and instead putting to a vote of the body when it is well within your authority to say there's only been two people, and there is a full queue of people this morning waiting to speak on this issue, that I would like to know why we aren't doing that.

ARCH: As I recall, Senator, there was, there was debate on Thursday before we adjourned on the recons--

M. CAVANAUGH: Not on this motion.

ARCH: --on the reconsideration, yes. We had-- that, that, that motion was up and was debated.

M. CAVANAUGH: At the--

ARCH: Due to the--.

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M. CAVANAUGH: There was a beginning of debate on the motion to reconsider. But it was not a very full debate, it only began right before we adjourned, and it was last week, and we have just taken it back up and only two people have spoken this morning.

ARCH: The complexity of the, the complexity of the issue is not the reconsideration motion, it's the, it's the bill itself. And, and so I don't believe that it is necessary for the chair to rule. This will be a decision of the body.

M. CAVANAUGH: So why do we have this rule? un--under what precedent does the [AUDIO MALFUNCTION].

ARCH: Senator, we're going to move to the question for the body. The question before the we are following the--

M. CAVANAUGH: Point of order.

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh, please come forward. Senator Cavanaugh, what is your point of order?

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. My point of order was that we were in the middle of a discussion of my inquiry, and my microphone was turned off before we had concluded that discussion. That is inappropriate.

ARCH: It is not correct. Senator Cavanaugh, I had addressed that issue. I had said that there would not be a ruling of the chair. It is not necessary in this situation. The rules--

M. CAVANAUGH: We had not concluded.

ARCH: --the rules allow.

M. CAVANAUGH: We had not concluded. You turned my microphone off before we had concluded. I--

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh, I would ask that you, I would ask that you please come forward.

M. CAVANAUGH: I want--

ARCH: We will not be debating this on the microphone, you are out of order.

M. CAVANAUGH: I am not out of order. It is a point of order.

ARCH: There's been no ruling of the chair, Senator Cavanaugh. Senator Cavanaugh, we will ask that you state your point of order.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you. My point of order is I don't know where in the rules it says that you can turn off my microphone when we are having a point of inquiry. You turned off my microphone because you don't want to have the conversation on the microphone. However, it is my prerogative to not take off the conversation offline and have it privately. I want my conversations on the microphone, on the record, and when I step away from this microphone and I go up there, that is taking it off. And I would like acknowledgment that you should not have turned off my microphone during the point of inquiry until we had concluded.

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh, you begin with a parliamentary inquiry. I believe that that question was answered. Not perhaps, to your satisfaction, but I did answer that question. Then you went to a point of order. I asked--

M. CAVANAUGH: No, I went--

ARCH: --for your point of order.

M. CAVANAUGH: --to a point of order when my microphone was turned off.

ARCH: Your parliamentary question was answered. What is your point of order?

M. CAVANAUGH: That my microphone should not have been turned off. You answered it. We were having a back and forth discussion about it. I was trying to get to a more full answer, and you could have said to me, you are finished answering it, and then you let me say, OK, then I'm not satisfied, but we'll move forward. But that's not what you did. You turned off my microphone, you silenced me. You should not have turned off my microphone. That's my point of order. My microphone should not have been turned off.

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh, I answered your parliamentary inquiry.

M. CAVANAUGH: So you think it's OK to silence me?

ARCH: It was, it was time to move on. The point had been made.

M. CAVANAUGH: Not to my satisfaction. I was the one making the inquiry. And you cut off. You got the last word on my inquiry and silenced me. That is not appropriate.

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh, I answered your question, not to your satisfaction. We are going to move to the vote.

M. CAVANAUGH: Where in the rules does it say that you can turn off my microphone during a point of inquiry?

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh, we're going to move to the vote.

M. CAVANAUGH: Where in the rules does it say that you can turn? That's my point of order. My point of order is--

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh--

M. CAVANAUGH: --you turned off my microphone.

ARCH: --you are now out of order. I'm going to turn the microphone off. Thank you. The question before the body is, shall debate cease? All those in favor-- Senator Cavanaugh, there is no ruling of the chair to overrule. Senator Cavanaugh, are you willing to come forward to discuss this? The Legislature will stand at ease till 9:45.

[AT EASE].

The Legislature will resume. When we left it, senator Cavanaugh and I were discussing the issue. There were, there were two motions that were actually, that were actually brought forth motions. Two questions. One was a parliamentary inquiry, one was a point of order. The parliamentary inquiry I addressed. The point of order was under discussion when her microphone was turned off. And I believe that we prematurely shut off that microphone. Senator Cavanaugh, point of order is now yours to speak to?

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for the acknowledgment. And I will withdraw my motion to overrule the chair, and we can proceed.

ARCH: Colleagues, the question before the body is the question of calling the question. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. There's been a request for a roll call vote. Mr. Clerk, please call the roll.

CLERK: Senator Anderson voting yes. Senator Arch voting yes. Senator Armendariz. Senator Ballard voting yes. Senator Bosn voting yes. Senator Bostar. Senator Brandt voting yes. Senator John Cavanaugh voting no. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh voting no. Senator Clements voting yes. Senator Clouse voting yes. Senator Conrad voting no. Senator DeBoer. Senator DeKay. Senator Dorn voting yes. Senator Dover. Senator Dungan voting no. Senator Fredrickson voting no. Senator Guereca voting no. Senator Hallstrom voting yes. Senator Hansen. Senator Hardin. Senator Holdcroft voting yes. Senator Hughes voting yes. Senator Hunt voting no. Senator Ibach voting yes. Senator Jacobson voting yes. Senator Juarez. Senator Juarez voting no. Senator Kauth voting yes. Senator Lippincott voting yes. Senator Lonowski voting yes. Senator McKeon voting yes. Senator McKinney voting no. Senator Meyer voting yes. Senator Moser voting yes. Senator Murman voting yes. Senator Prokop voting no. Senator Quick voting no. Senator Raybould voting no. Senator Riepe voting yes. Senator Rountree voting no. Senator Sanders voting yes. Senator Sorrentino voting yes. Senator Spivey voting no. Senator Storer voting yes. Senator Storm voting yes. Senator Strommmen voting yes. Senator von Gillern voting yes. Senator Wordekemper voting yes. Vote is 28 ayes, 14 nays, Mr. President, to cease debate.

ARCH: The question has been called. Senator Dungan, you're recognized to close on your motion.

DUNGAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Colleagues, I would once again encourage your green vote on the motion to reconsider, and ultimately your green vote on Senator McKinney's motion to IPP. I want to resituate kind of what we're talking about here. I understand there's a lot of different sort of threads that have been going on with this debate, but at the end of the day, what we are talking about doing later on with an amendment to LB415 is walking back the vote of the people. And again, I've said this before, I'll say it again because I think it bears repeating. LB415 represents what I believe is a good faith effort amongst individuals from the business community and the advocacy world, and many other folks who've been involved for years in this ballot initiative to work on paid sick leave to come up with some clarifications and some definitions. And what we have in LB415 is what many people coming into the legislative session believe to be the cleanup bill as it pertains to the paid sick leave ballot initiative. I would vote green on LB415 in its current iteration, I would vote green on LB415 with some of the committee amendments. But unfortunately we have a committee amendment on LB415 that is going to be going up on the board if we allow it to sort of proceed in that manner, which

defies what the people voted for. And I don't believe its intention is malicious, I don't believe that the intention of that amendment is to tell people their voices don't matter, but unfortunately, that is the impact. And I don't think you have to have malicious intent for the impact to be negative. And what we would be doing with the walk-back that ultimately we're going to see if that passes, is telling the voters that their vote doesn't matter. And I've talked to a number of folks in my community about this issue over the weekend, because obviously we did start talking about the underlying bill, LB415, last week, and what continued to come up was this idea that a lot of my friends and my colleagues had said to me, which was just why does the Legislature keep trying to change what the people voted for? And there's a fear that I hear from these people that we're not going to do what they want. And again, that there's other analogies such as medical marijuana, where the medical marijuana ballot initiative passed with overwhelming support, and there has been a pervasive fear amongst the public that we as a Legislature are not going to do our job in effectuating or putting into effect what the voters wanted. And I think that with this issue, we see the same thing. Now, again, I think there are valid questions that come up when we talk about the paid sick leave, there are valid concerns. I've had an opportunity to sit down with members of the state Chamber of Commerce, the local Chamber of Commerce and other business leaders to talk to them about those concerns. And I've walked away from each of those conversations believing that there is a good faith desire to work together to address those concerns while still putting into place what the people voted for in a meaningful fashion. And my understanding, colleagues, is that's what LB415 was. And so to try to attach other bills to LB415 that, that walk back, that compromise, that really fly in the face of what the voters have supported, I think is problematic. So, colleagues, this is an opportunity for us to stand up. This is an opportunity for us to step into our power as a Legislature and say that it's our job not to tell people what they can't do, but to stand up for what the people voted for. And I think it's our job to listen to the public when it comes to ballot initiatives like paid sick leave and to say that we want to ensure that what they voted for gets put into place in a meaningful manner. So, colleagues, I, I think that we're going to continue this debate here today. Chances are I see that the queue is fairly full. I would hope that we continue to at least have that debate, and that we're permitted to continue having the conversation, because most of what we've talked about up until this point has been about whether or not we're going to put in place what the voters have talked about. I haven't heard anybody really at all

stand up who is opposed to what the voters supported on paid sick leave and say on the mic what they're scared of. I haven't heard really anybody stand up and provide, I think, real information about what some of the concerns are, and I'm open to that conversation. Like I said, we can have a conversation where intelligent minds can disagree, but we need to be able to have that talk. And so I hope some of my colleagues who are supportive of LB415 as well, and some of my colleagues who are supportive of the committee amendment are able to speak a little bit more to why they think that's necessary. And my hope is that we can have a conversation today that ultimately--

ARCH: Time, Senator.

DUNGAN: --pushes back on some of these concerns. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Colleagues, the question before the body is the reconsideration motion. All those in favor vote aye, all those opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: 12 ayes, 28 nays and the motion to reconsider, Mr. President.

ARCH: The reconsider motion is not successful. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB415 introduced by, excuse me, Senator Ballard. It's a bill for an act relating to the Nebraska Healthy Families and Workplaces Act; to amend section 2, 3 and 4, Initiative Law 2024, number 436; redefines terms, changes provisions relating to paid sick leave-- sick time; harmonizes provisions; repeals the original section. The bill was read for the first time on January 17 of this year and referred to the Business and Labor Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Kauth, you're recognized to open on the committee amendment.

KAUTH: Thank you, Mr. President. LB415 was heard in the Business and Labor Committee on February 24. We received proponent testimony from the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and every area chamber of commerce, the grocery, hospitality, retail, petroleum marketers, and convenience store industries. The National Federation-- National Federation of Independent business, and the Nebraska Bankers Association, Lincoln Independent Business Association, and we received a opponent testimony from the Nebraska State Council of Electrical Workers and a local

hairstylist. We received neutral testimony from the Woman's Fund of Omaha, Nebraska Appleseed, and an apartment complex manager. The bill serves as a cleanup bill for the initiative law 2024 number 436, also known as Paid Sick Leave Initiative or the Nebraska Healthy Families and Workplace Act. The opposition was rather limited and focused on issues for workers who work for multiple employers as part of a trades union, as well as determining the average hourly wage when someone is commission-based. We did vote the bill out of committee with the committee amendment. AM545 makes a few changes to the original LB415 and adds in several other bills. The change to LB415. An outline of how paid sick leave is calculated for employees paid on the commission, piece rate, mileage, or fee for service basis. The average weekly rate of pay calculation already in statute is divided by 40 to get an average hourly rate for the employee. Second, the committee amendment as the provisions of the following bills LB402 from Senator von Gillern amends a gambling winnings set off for Outstanding Debt Act to allow the Department of Labor to collect overpayments of unemployment benefits from an individual who failed to report gambling winnings under the Employment Security Law. LB435 from Senator Wordekemper, which allows for equivalency requests as well as variations under the Conveyance Safety Act, as well as loosening the requirements for obtaining an elevator mechanic license while establishing the requirements for obtaining an elevator contractor license. And LB698 from Senator Strommen, which also amends the initiative and provides exceptions for temporary or seasonal agricultural workers, employees younger than 16, and employers with less than 11 employees. I've asked each of the senators who have a piece of this package to get on the mic and speak a little more on their material. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator John Cavanaugh, you're recognized for a point of personal privilege.

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. I would ask for a division of the question of AM545.

ARCH: Senator Cavanaugh, Senator Ballard, and Senator Kauth, please come forward. Mr. Clerk, please explain the division.

CLERK: Mr. President, the division of the committee amendment is such. AM770 was divided out of the committee amendment, that contains the entirety of Senator Strommen's LB698. AM771 is the remainder of the committee amendment in its entirety. So the first amendment, AM770, is

for all intents and purposes, LB698, AM771 is the remainder. Senator Kauth, as chair of the committee, has chosen to take up AM770 first.

ARCH: Senator Murman has several guests this morning that I would like to introduce. First, Keith Kliever and Clayton Kliever from Saronville, Nebraska, and they are located under the south balcony. Welcome to Nebraska's Legislature. Senator Murman would also like to recognize eight 12th grade students from Holdrege High School in Holdrege, Nebraska, and they are located in the north balcony. Please rise and be welcomed by your Legislature. Senator Kauth, you are recognized to open on the first part of the division.

KAUTH: Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like to yield my time to Senator Strommen.

ARCH: Senator Strommen, nine minutes, 45 seconds.

STROMMEN: Thank you very much. LB698 amends the Nebraska Healthy Families and Workplaces Act, also known as Initiative 436 or the paid sick leave ballot initiative to remove temporary or seasonal agricultural workers and 14 and 15-year-olds from definitions, and exempt employees-- employers with ten or fewer employees from the act, and to allow the Department of Labor to enforce the act. Actually, that's been pulled out in a, in an amendment, but we'll get to that. This bill is an effort to shield Nebraska's smallest businesses and their employees from the detrimental effect of this act. To be clear, this bill is not an attempt to undermine the ballot initiative. The state constitution limits how much detail can be included on the ballot. It's my belief the Legislature can and should iron out details and make these laws make sense for everyone, workers and businesses alike. I know firsthand businesses need flexibility, and adjusting to government mandates without common sense changes to laws we've seen passed via our ballot initiative process, we're making it nearly impossible to hire young people, people reentering the workforce, and people with disabilities. These are people learning the basics, including simply to show up on time, interact with customers, and how to manage money. Small business is the driver of Nebraska's economy. As I mentioned, mandated paid sick leave as we have under the Nebraska Healthy Families and Workplace Act, while well-intentioned, will ultimately harm in several ways. Increased labor cost lead to job losses. When the government requires businesses to provide paid sick leave, employers face higher labor costs, small businesses struggle to absorb these costs and respond by reducing employee hours, freezing or cutting wages, or eliminating positions altogether. For a low wage and

entry level workers, this will mean fewer job opportunities as employers opt for automation to reduce hiring, also known as cost of goods sold. Higher prices with lower taxes, fewer mandates, and a level playing field, small businesses can compete with even the largest corporations, but they have higher input costs and can't spread these costs out of the new mandates and higher taxes the way the big players can. They have to raise prices quicker, driving customers away and eventually rendering communities with less competition, fewer choices, and eventually higher prices and worse service. Which brings me to the next point, a competitive disadvantage and business closure. Smaller businesses operate on thin profit margins and will not be able to compete with larger companies that can more easily absorb the costs of mandated benefits. As a result, small businesses will be forced to shut down, eliminate employees altogether, in either event this will lead to lower wages, less competition, and likely fewer benefits over time. Reduced workplace flexibility. Many employers prefer flexible compensation structures that are already in place. Some might prioritize higher wages or additional benefits like paid sick leave. Mandating one size fits all benefits reduces workers ability to negotiate for the compensation package that best suits their needs. Many Nebraska small businesses also provide paid time off. The act incentivizes bifurcation of leave, and might mean that full time employees with more generous leave are now offered less time because employees have to extend benefits to part time workers. Last, the act sets forth a robust enforcement mechanism for violations of the act and to adjudicate claims between employers and employees. The Department of Labor is well suited to enforce the act as it enforces most employment related issues. LB-- Nope, we changed that. While the idea of paid sick leave is appealing, government mandates on businesses can create unintended negative consequences for employees, specifically those who work for small businesses. Nebraska voters were given Initiative 436 on a take it or leave it basis. It is incumbent upon the Legislature to ensure it is workable. LB698 recognizes the will of the voters, while also avoiding a few serious detriments to small businesses and workers and the Nebraska economy. As this law is implemented, we might find that even more must be done to make sure this mandate makes sense for employees and employers. So really, at the end of the day. Small businesses are the backbone of Nebraska, they're the backbone of the western economy. And this, this sort of puts a jackboot on those small businesses, especially those employees for those small businesses. We want people to be working. We want to see these people employed. We want to see

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them in jobs. And we don't want to do anything that's going to negatively affect their ability to do that. Thank you.

ARCH: Mr. Clerk, for a motion.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator McKinney would move to bracket the bill until June 9th, 2025 with MO111.

ARCH: Senator McKinney, you're recognized open on your motion.

McKINNEY: Thank you, Mr. President. Again, I rise to highlight a few things. Number one, as I've stated multiple times, our constituents wanted paid sick leave more than they wanted us here. And the research also shows that paid sick leave is good for the economy. It is good for Nebraska. And that's most likely why the people supported it. And that's something we have to think about. That's something that we need to consider and why we shouldn't take away or strip away what the voters approved. It wasn't a take it or leave it, it approach because the voters had the right, they had the time to evaluate the ballot initiative and whether or not it was something that made sense to them. I don't think it was take it or leave it, because they could have voted no, but instead, overwhelmingly in every district, 60 plus percent, they voted yes. So it's obvious that the people wanted this. In my district, it was 92%, and so a lot of them-- a huge percentage. So that's nothing to snuff at, that's nothing to ignore. And we, we have to understand that, and we have to consider that and not get up here and say that it's bad for the economy because none of the research shows that, no research. Out-- if, if, if there is research that says paid sick leave would destroy the economy, I'm open ears, I'm, I'm all ears, and I would love to see it. Where is the research that says pay sick leave will take away jobs? Because everything that I've seen thus far says the opposite. It helps. It keeps people at work. It attracts people to our state. It helps retain people at jobs. It makes sure that people, that individuals feel secure at the, at the places they're working. So let's keep the conversation pure in, in that sense. Unless there's some alternative research that I'm, I'm not aware of, and, and if you have it, please bring it to me. I'll, I'll love to look at it, honestly. I'm, I'm an open individual, I'm open to all opinions. If there's research that says paid sick leave will destroy the economy, I would like to see it, but I haven't seen otherwise. And the voters voted overwhelmingly, and I think we should stand with the people because we were hired to work for the people, not work against them. And I'll yield the rest of my time to Senator John Cavanaugh. Thank you.

ARCH: Senator John Cavanaugh, yield time six, 50.

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Senator McKinney. All right, colleagues, this is a good learning experience, the first time for many of you where we have a division of the question. So I thought it would be good to have a little instruction on where we're at. So for those of you who've been here, you recall we've done this on some of the big omnibus bills, like the tax package. We divided the question on LB34 during the special session to try to take out some of the individual tax increases. So one of the reasons you would do a division of the question is committees do kick out these big packages. And sometimes it's just out of an interest of convenience to get things together so that, you know, things that are similar or whatever, that are the jurisdiction of the committee to for efficiency sake. I think we've had a couple in the General Affairs Committee since I've been there that deal with-- well, actually, Senator Hughes' bill is a good example. We had regulation and a taxation of those little pouch tobacco things or non-- smokeless tobacco. I don't know what they called ZYNs, I guess. So things that are put together-- but sometimes packages can be put together in a way that's called log-rolling, where you put together bills that people want to vote for some of them, but they want to vote against others. And so that is a generally frowned upon practice if you can't tell from the phrase log rolling, it's not considered a compliment. And so we have a rule that allows for division of bills for packages like this. And the standard is essentially it's the right of any senator to ask for a division as long as it is divisible. So in this case, the division is Senator Strommen's bill, which he just introduced, which I believe is LB698, was a standalone bill that was introduced. And then the other portion of the division is all of the rest of the bills. And so the reason for the division is that as we progress in this debate, you've all heard a lot already in the two and a half hours we've debated this, and we'll have a good number of hours today and tomorrow, and I assume the next day, I guess, depending on the math, to talk about this. But there are a lot of people who do not want to vote for Senator Strommen's portion of this bill in particular. I think there are some people who do want to vote for it, but that part is a part that gives people heartburn, they don't want to vote for it. And they were-- that there were people who maybe would feel like they need to vote for the package overall, because of the compromise that's enshrined in LB415, the underlying LB415, or because they like the other portions that were articulated earlier, which I think are Senator von Gillern's about people winning, you know, casino gambling winnings that they don't report, get

reassessed against their, I think, their child support, so cleaning up that language, or Senator Wordekemper's bill that I'm not exactly sure what, it had something to do with mileage. But so people think they want to, need to vote for the clean up parts of LB415 or these other two bills, but they don't like the other part, and so they feel compelled to vote for the whole bill because it has parts they like, even though they really don't like. LB698. And so the reason for the division is to give people an opportunity to vote against the parts they don't like. And so the way divisions work is this has been divided into two sections. We've got AM770 is on the board right now. We'll have AM771 I believe will be on the board, well, sometime later maybe today or tomorrow. But AM770 is the part that is Senator Strommen's bill. And so we'll have an opportunity to vote on that. If it does not get 25 votes, it will not be included in the package. So it will be basically eliminated from the amendment. And then we would take up AM771, and if that then gets 25 votes, then that would be the only portion that was added. So if you're one of the folks here, and I know there are some of you, and maybe a few people aren't listening already because we've moved on to the phase where people kind of stop listening when people are talking. But this is something to listen to. If you think that LB669 goes too far against the will of the voters, you have an opportunity to vote red on AM770, or to be present, not voting on AM770. If AM770 does not get 25 votes, it will not be included in the package. So then you'd have the opportunity to vote green on AM771, which is the bill, includes the bill that Senator Ballard negotiated with the Chambers of Commerce, the stakeholders who advocated for this ballot initiative to be put, you know, to be put on the ballot and advocated for what's in this bill. They came together during the interim, said, you know, this ballot initiative passed, and yes, there are reasonable places in which we can make changes that will help this still serve the intention of the people and the ballot initiative. But we can make some changes that will not undermine that intention, but make it work better for businesses in Nebraska to actually, actually implement it. So that is what the other portion would be. So if you want to respect the will of the voters, you don't want to make changes to the ballot initiative more than is absolutely necessary to effectuate the will of the voters and to give breathing room to businesses, then you can vote against AM770 and for AM771, and then you can vote for the package overall. I know there's some other amendments that might be put up that make some other changes, and I don't know what all of them are. How much time do I have left, Mr. President? I know I'm next in the queue, but I'm curious. One minute? OK, but I'm next in the queue, so I will just start talking about the

other part here. So there's other amendments that will be put up. And some of them having, having conversations with people about what their concerns are, are further compromises. So I have an amendment that I just put up that's to the other portion, that would allow for a larger exemption for the smallest of businesses. So the ballot initiative language included all businesses. I believe Senator Strommen's bus-- amendment includes businesses under, is it under 10 or 10 or under? And then and agriculture, under 16, and a few other things. So I have an amendment to the other section that would integrate a exception for businesses that are under four. So if you have less than four employees would not be subjected to this law. This is something we already have an exception under minimum wage for businesses of that size, so it parallels--

ARCH: Time, Senator. Senator Storm would like to recognize some special guests, 29 fourth grade students from Aquinas, Aquinas Catholic School in David City. However, there are some very special guests, Jacob, his son and Colleen, his wife are also in the group. Please rise and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator John Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. I appreciate the introduction, just, you know, in, in the flow of the conversation. So thank you, Mr. President. So again, I was talking about opportunities to compromise on this bill. So we are at a point, I know a lot of people are saying, oh, you know, it's a filibuster, it's, you know, obstructionist. But this really is, Senator Conrado always says this, trying to structure debate. So the division of the question is not an attempt to take up time. Taking up time is not a problem. If you think that we have to go through, like, great lengths to take a bill eight hours, then you're not paying attention. The reason for the division is so that people can take a vote in what they actually believe. And, by the way, they can go back to their constituents and say, yes, I voted for this bill, but I voted against the part that most undermined your intentions and what you did. And so I'll talk at this point, since I have a couple of minutes left here about one of my biggest problems with AM770. So the ballot initiative, I printed off a good portion of it earlier, but the ballot initiative language is about ten pages long, I think, and it has, let's see, ten, eleven sections, the last section is just the severability in short part, but there's-- section 8 is called enforcement, and it has, section 8 has 8 sections itself. And this is basically gives teeth to requirement that people provide paid sick leave. So if you were required to paid sick, paid, paid sick leave, but there was no repercussion for not doing it, it's not really much

of a requirement, right? So that's what section eight does is it has this enforcement mechanism. What AM770 does is it strikes three of the eight sections in the enforcement section. So it's basically three whole paragraphs of the ballot language, three of the eight paragraphs about enforcement. That is an incredibly large change to the will of the people, the, the voters spoke. And I know there are folks, I just had a conversation with one of our colleagues here, that believes that the citizens didn't fully understand what they were implementing here. And I disagree with that. I have faith in my constituents who voted something like 88% for this, that they expected there to be teeth to this, an enforcement mechanism that would allow them or their neighbors to enforce their right that this bill provides to them. So I think that that is not true, that people didn't know that they were putting in this enforcement mechanism. And I certainly think it's bad policy on our part to go to a ballot issue that was passed four months ago, five months ago, I don't know exactly, November, and just cut out whole paragraphs of it. It's not tweaking around the edges, it's not making a small change to make sure that, you know, we're not counting the, the owners spouse as an employee for purposes of size of the business, or we're not, you know, counting our vacation hours or we're not making sure people don't get paid out for the sick leave if they leave the job, you know, clean up type of stuff. We're talking about just whole swaths of the ballot language just being stricken by this, which is a huge overstep by this Legislature to say we know better than the people who voted for this. And I think it is disrespectful to the people to say, I don't think they knew what they were voting for. Therefore, I'm empowered to just strike out sections of this bill. So that is one of my biggest problems with AM770. I have other problems with it as well, and I'll probably talk about them. I'm going to run out of time here. But again, this is a serious conversation, a serious opportunity for folks to make a determination about whether they want to vote against AM770 because it goes too far, but still pass some reasonable constraints that are embodied in AM771 when we get to it. So I would say, listen, think, talk to your constituents, read your emails, check and see where people are at on whether AM770 goes too far. If you think we need to make some changes to the ballot initiative, then I think LB415 as originally written under a AM771 strikes that balance, and AM770 goes too far. So that's why we divided the question, to provide you with a service, the opportunity here to vote your, your conscience, vote your beliefs, vote for your constituents will, vote for your-- what you would like to see happen with this ballot initiative language, and not just to be forced--

ARCH: Time, Senator.

J. CAVANAUGH: --into voting for something because it's been log-rolled together. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in support of Senator McKinney's bracket motion. I would like to note for Senator John Cavanaugh that John Cavanaugh III said that your description was confusing, he'd like you to repeat it. So-- but that was six minutes ago, so maybe now your last five minutes on the mic, maybe he now understands the, the amendment. He wanted more-- he wanted Senator John Cavanaugh to talk more. So I appreciate the division of the question, and I do support the bracket motion. I'm not comfortable with any of these bills. I mean, I, I understand that when we do things at a ballot that we have to do some clean up to them, but I'm not comfortable with anything that erodes the will of the people. And I don't think that the people were confused about what they were voting for, I think it was pretty clear. I think there were ballot initiatives that were confusing. I will say that the competing reproductive health ballot initiatives I found confusing. I was concerned that I was maybe not even going to vote for the one that I intended to vote for, but I, I also think that the people spoke on that and voted for what they wanted to vote for. And so same thing happened when we had the most confusing ballot initiative of my lifetime was the repeal of the repeal of the death penalty. And even the Secretary of state said at that time that they didn't think that people knew what they were voting for. Whether that would have changed if it were clearer, whether that would have changed the outcome or not, I don't know, but it was definitely a very confusing ballot initiative. But this one was pretty clear, and there was no statewide opposition campaign, and there was no even statewide proponent campaign for the ballot initiative once they qualified, it was kind of like, all right, this is qualified, let's see what the people want, and this is what the people wanted. So I'm, I'm very hesitant to make any changes when it comes to the will of the voters of Nebraska, specifically the voters in my district, but really the voters of the entire state. This does seem to be in line with what the people of Nebraska value, and therefore I will be in opposition to changes to that. Things that strike whole sections of, of what they voted for is not something that I, I can support. And I understand that, that the introducer of these various bills are trying to find something that is a little bit more, I don't know, feasible, profitable for businesses.

But the reality is, is that we've had an opportunity to do this through the Legislature in my time, there's been numerous bills introduced to do this where we could have, we could have crafted it. We could have decided what the exemptions were or weren't. And we chose not to. Not my choice, but the collective body's choice. So I am, I am unwilling to make changes to the will of the voters especially when this body wasn't willing to take this up on its own prior to the voters speaking. And so I'm going to remain in opposition to any changes to the ballot initiative on sick leave. I understand that this is a complex issue for businesses, but we have to build in costs for doing business, and this is a cost that now needs to be built into the cost of doing business. And if businesses can't afford that, then we as a Legislature should think of other alternatives of funding mechanisms that we can do to help support businesses. And I was I was going to yield some of my time, but I actually ended up using most of it because I can see the yellow light is on. So I think instead of trying to erode the will of the people, what we should be doing is talking about what can we do to help small businesses that are, that are going to have a difficult time implementing this. What can we do to support them and not erode the will of the people, but lift up the will of the people and small businesses at the same time? And I think that there is an opportunity there if we're willing to have that conversation. We have to decide what our priorities are as a state and our priorities, people or our priorities, business. And they don't have to necessarily be in conflict. But right now, this legislation puts them in direct conflict, and I don't think that they have to be. I think we can find a path forward. But this isn't it.

ARCH: Time, Senator.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Armendariz would like to welcome some special guests. They are eight fourth grade students from Heritage Elementary in Bennington, and they are located in the south balcony. Please rise and be welcomed by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Spivey, you're recognized to speak.

SPIVEY: Thank you, Mr. President. And good morning, colleagues, folks watching online, all of the folks in the balcony and out in the rotunda. I really appreciate the conversation this morning, and have lots of thoughts. And so really excited to finally be able to get on the mic and to be able to address some of those. I think starting out, and I think it's important to note that we have one of the most

accessible processes for ballot initiatives in the US. And I think that's important to name because the people are our second house. We are elected to represent their interests, but it is not a binary space where we are the end all be all. Our constituents let us know when they don't agree with us, when they want us to take a certain stance. They give us feedback on the policies and practices that we are implementing, the discussion. And the second house has said that this body has not taken up key issues that are important to them. And that's why we saw in this last election cycle on the ballot the most initiatives that we have seen in Nebraska around key issues that are impacting working families. And so as we are now looking to execute the will of the people with paid sick leave in LB415, I think it's really important that we do take time to discuss, we have critical conversations, and we actually use our time to debate this. I don't think this is something that we can just fly past without that intentional, thoughtful, and respectful conversation that, again, really honors the people that we were sent here to represent. And so from my understanding with LB415 that there was a lot of work spent with Senator Ballard and other activists and partners, chambers of commerce, and different folks that are impacted around an agreement on language. And so I can appreciate that intention and where that original bill's text is. I have concerns around LB698, which is the amendment that is up now and what it erodes. And so as I was looking at this, it exempts folks under 16 years of age for earning paid sick leave. It removes employers with under 11 employees. There was the removal of claims and any recourse, which I believe that there has been some work to try to address that. But those just three components are integral again to supporting workers rights. And this is why it's really important to have people in this body that are actually impacted by the policy that they passed. At 16 years old, I worked a full time job. I actually had two full time jobs while being a straight-A student, because I had to help take care of my family, and my money went to me. And I was sick. I remember that my mom, as a single mom who provided the best life for my sister and I would have to work, and she didn't have the time off, and I would stay home with my sister to make sure that she was OK. And so when we have these preconceived ideas around who deserves time to actually be sick and take care of their health, that is harmful. And it's because people in this body have not had the lived experience that really represent the collective ideas and and what folks are wanting across our state. I am a small business owner. We have less than 11 employees and we don't offer benefits. And it's really hard to retain staff. Because again, people have to choose between their personal priorities and work. And

so for us, this is an opportunity for us to be able to say, hey, there is paid sick leave, as written I think it is five days for a company our size that they can utilize, so folks can still take care of themselves as well as be present in the workplace. And so I see my light is coming on, and so I'm almost out of time, so I will punch back in. But I have really grave concerns about this amendment and what it does for working people and truly our workforce and economy as we look at retaining staff and ensuring that people have what they need to take care of themselves while being engaged in the workplace. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: You know, Senator Fredrickson, you're recognized to speak.

FREDRICKSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning colleagues. Good morning Nebraskans. So I rise today in full support of LB415. I mentioned this previously when we've spoken about this bill that I think Senator Ballard did a lot of thoughtful work on this and put in some appropriate guardrails for the initiative. I rise in strong opposition to AM770 as folks have been talking a little bit about that. And, you know, I know the temperature in this-- in the room this morning has been, been a little high, and I want to underscore why that, why that is. You know, we are talking about literally overturning what was a landslide decision of the people of Nebraska and gutting that. So people have strong feelings about that, and there is good reason to have strong feelings about that. I want to reiterate a few things. I think we've heard a little bit of fearmongering around what this might mean for, for small businesses. And so I want to be really, really clear about what guardrails and safeguards are currently in place for, for this bill. First and foremost, this is not, we're not talking about unlimited paid sick leave. This is not something that folks can call off work every single day and get paid for. We're talking about an accrual of up to five hou-- five days per year for someone who is age 20 or younger, or seven days per year for someone who is 20, or over the age of 20. So this is not an unlimited amount of paid sick leave. You also don't get all five or seven days right away. You accrue one hour, one hour of paid sick time for every 30 hours you work. So we've heard a lot of arguments about what about seasonal workers and folks who are detasseling. Those folks have to work 30 full hours of hassling to get one hour of paid sick leave. One hour, not even a full day. So we need to be very clear about what is at place, what is actually being discussed here, because I think there's some confusion about what, what, what voters have actually voted on and, and what their-- what, what actually happens here. You also can't bank time. So if you've accrued your 5 or 7 days, you can't

keep banking that, you stop at that, you're capped at that 5 or 7 days. So this idea that folks are going to be, you know, misusing or abusing this is, I think, misinformed. I also want to speak a little bit to a small business perspective from, from an urban environment perspective. So I, I represent a district in Omaha, and so small businesses in my district and in my city are struggling significantly to find workforce, that's no secret, it is very difficult to find employees. And a potential, I think unintentional impact of something like AM770 is that you might have a mom and a pop, a small, you know, under ten employees business who doesn't offer this. And so if you are someone who is choosing if you're out of college or a high school student who's choosing somewhere to live, and, you know if you work at company A, that you are going to have-- to be able to accrue paid sick time, and in company B, you're not going to be able to accrue that, you're likely to choose the company that's going to have better benefits for you. And so, yes, companies can choose to offer this regardless of the law. But it's all about the perception. It's the perception of the workforce. It's the perception of the voters. So if you have a small mom and pop coffee shop and you don't have people applying there anymore because they feel like they can get more benefits at another place like Starbucks, that's, that's going to harm small businesses in communities like Omaha and communities like Lincoln. So you-- we need to be thinking hard about that component of things. I know Senator Spivey spoke a little bit to-- about this on the mic, and I, I just want to lift this up again. You know, this is actually good for small business because small businesses want healthy workforce. They want their employees to be healthy. They want their staff to be healthy. They want people to be able to take care of themselves because they need productivity. You know, I think about this all the time, about how many, how many missed opportunities of productivity we have in the workforce because of issues related to physical illness, mental health related crises. There are studies out there that show decreased productivity when people are not able to take care of themselves. And so, you know, we need to be playing the long game here and not thinking about this so myopically. So I see my yellow lights on. I've got a lot more to talk about, so I'll get back in the queue here. But I, I will continue to oppose AM770 and I will strongly support LB415. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Sorrentino, you're recognized to speak.

SORRENTINO: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in support of LB415, but specifically, I'd like to address AM770, and I think in order to get a level set on just where we're at, it might be helpful for the body who

probably hasn't read the actual initiative language since November 5th of 2024. So I'll take just 45 seconds and read what that initiative actually said. And it said, shall a statute be enacted which, one, provides eligible employees the right to earn paid sick time for personal or family health needs; two, entities' employee-- entities' employees of employers with fewer than 20 employees to accrue and use up to 40 hours of such time annually, and those employed by an employer with 20 or more employees to accrue and use up to 56 hours of such time annually; three, specifies conditions regarding paid sick time; four, prohibits retaliation against employees for exercising such rights; five, adopts documentation requirements; and six, establishes enforcement powers and a civil cause of action for violations. That's roughly the 100 words, which is, I believe, the limit on initiatives. It doesn't go into any great detail, and I will agree. Senator Dungan, Dungan made some great points earlier that it does need guardrails, it does need parameters. And he stated that he is for LB415, just not so much some of the provisions of what was AM698 [SIC], which is now AM770. And I want to adjust just one portion of that. And that's that there is some guardrails, if you will, being put up to exempt employers of ten employees or less. Here in the Legislature, we're very familiar with legislative bills and having an attachment for something called a fiscal note. Of course, fiscal notes are not attached to initiatives. And while I trust the will of the voters, I do believe that they did not understand the cost of this and specifically the cost of this to a small employer. I was an employer for many, many, many years. Started off small, got a little bit bigger. There is a huge cost to this. Not only from a financial standpoint, from a human resource standpoint. If I have five employees, and one or two of them are taking leave and I have to pay them, I've lost 40% of my workforce. So I don't, I don't think we're undoing the will of the people as much as we are contemplating what the financial impact may be. I will make reference to the federal FMLA. It exempts employers of 50 lives or less from compliance. Here in Nebraska, we're exempting employers of ten employees or less. So I, I would urge you to vote, think about and vote green on AM770 and the follow up LB415. Thank you.

ARCH: Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President, and good morning, colleagues. I am generally opposed to LB415 and the committee amendment. I am trying to keep an open mind on the underlying bill, but we can see by opening the door to undermining the will of the people under the auspices of so-called technical corrections, it has opened a Pandora's box to

completely defy the will of the people. In regards to the paid sick leave ballot initiative. I have heard colleagues talk, and I watched the committee hearing as well, and it's been restated on the floor during debate. It is either at best misinformed dialog and debate, or at worst, intentionally misleading when it comes to basic civics, basic legal framework regarding initiatives in Nebraska. Under the Nebraska Constitution, the people have reserved for themselves the first power, initiative, Article III, Section 2. And when they act through initiative, they are acting as a co-equal legislative power. This is not an advisory opinion. Some states with tools of direct democracy like initiative, referendum, and recall literally and specifically allow for an advisory vote to be presented to ballot question to be presented to voters. Not in Nebraska. These are not advisory votes. They are coequal legislative actors when the people organize and petition to change the law or to change the Constitution. Additionally, there is no word limitation on initiatives, that is flat wrong. There is single subject restraints, but it is well understood that initiatives, constitutional or statutory, can be as short or as long as they need. It is not an arbitrary consideration as to word limit. It is a clearly defined legal test as to whether or not there is a natural and necessary connection. Additionally, I think senators, again, have been misinformed or have been misleading when it comes to what ballot initiatives actually say and do, and the legislators relationship therein after the will of the people is expressed through adopting an initiative or a referendum. Initiative and referendum, initiative in particular-- and look at the Nebraska Constitution, this is not my opinion, this is the Nebraska Constitution. They are self-executing. They do not need you to tinker with them. They do not need you to clarify them. They do not need you to pass judgment as to whether or not there should be carve outs or exemptions, or change dates, or delays. But it's also a textual question. When you look, for example, at something like voter ID, the people decided to amend the Constitution and on its face, textually clear said, we shall have voter ID and we leave it to the Legislature to figure it out. That's when the Legislature has an invitation from the electorate to act. That is not the case when it comes to the paid sick leave initiative. There was no directive to any member in this body to act. Yet you chose to, at the behest of big businesses, because they chose not to organize a campaign, because they didn't speak out, and they knew that they would come to the Legislature to undermine the will of the people, with delays and exemptions and carve-outs That hurt rural workers, that hurt young workers, that hurt women, that hurt women of-- that hurt workers of color. Exemptions and carve outs from

employment protections historically and presently fall the hardest on those working their way up the economic ladder. So you do not need to act and force you-- indeed, you should not act. It's not up to you to pass judgment any longer. You had over a decade to negotiate a paid sick leave measure in this body. You did not. You did not work in good faith. And the people had had enough, and they took it upon themselves to pass--

ARCH: Time, Senator.

CONRAD: --this clear measure.

ARCH: There are several guests to announce. First of all, Senator Conrad would like to recognize nine college students from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, and they are located in the south balcony. Please rise and be welcomed by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Guereca would like to recognize 25 community organizers from Heartland Worker Center in Omaha, and they are also located in the south balcony. Please rise. I would like to recognize Nebraska State Athletic Trainers Association members statewide. They are located in the south balcony. Please rise and be recognized by your Legislature. Multiple senators have members here. 223 students from Grace Abbott, Abbott School of Social Work, University of Nebraska-Omaha, and they are located in the south, the north, and the middle balcony. Please rise and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Turning to the queue, Senator Juarez, you are recognized to speak.

JUAREZ: Thank you. Can you guys hear me OK? Yeah? OK. I, of course, am in support of the sick leave that was passed by the voters. One of the reasons that I pursued my seat is because I have been dismayed by past Legislatures who have ignored the will of the voters. It was one of the things that really-- it was a one of the drivers for me, because I think it's an absolute insult to the integrity of the voters when the Legislature does not proceed as they have voted in the, in the ballot box. I trust their judgment, I think that there is integrity at the ballot box, and I wish that the Legislature would respect the decisions that they have made. I also wanted to state that 85.46% of my voters were supportive of paid sick leave. There are only three other senators whose voters chose more than that of my district. That was Senator Guereca's district, John Cavanaugh's district, and Senator McKinney's district. We were the top ones across the whole state who supported paid sick leave. Finally, I want to close with comments in the editorial from the Lincoln Star Journal about bills that are undermining the will of Nebraska voters. Last year, Nebraskans

overwhelmingly approved Initiative 436, with nearly 75% of those who cast ballots voting to require employers to offer at least five days of paid sick leave per year. The law that is the result of the initiative is set to take effect October 1st, and requires employers with fewer than 20 workers to offer at least five days of sick leave per year, and employers with 20 or more workers to offer at least seven paid days of leave annually. The initiative got 682,000 yes votes and 228,000 no votes from the second house across the state, with 89 of 93 counties in favor. Now, under pressure from business interests, the Nebraska Legislature, the first house, is attempting to undermine the paid sick leave law before it takes effect with LB698 from Senator Paul Strommen of Sydney, which would exempt businesses with ten or fewer employees, temporary or seasonal agriculture workers, and child workers under the age of 16 from the paid sick leave requirements. The arguments put forward in support of the carve outs would have more validity had there been an organized campaign against the initiative. And the contention that Nebraskans were uninformed about the initiative undermines voters who knew full well what they were voting on, and approved a specific language as a law to go on the books. For that reason alone, as they consider LB698, which was made a priority bill by the Business and Labor Committee, Senators need to respect the wishes and judgment of the electorate that approved the initiative with a higher percentage of votes than any other ballot initiative or candidate. Similarly, Senator Jane Raybould of Lincoln, is attempting to undermine the 22-- 2022 voter approved law that would raise the state's minimum wage to \$15 per hour in January. The grocery chain executive, who family owns the parent company of Russ Market and Super Saver, would instead cap increases to the minimum wage at 1.5% and allow businesses to pay younger than 16 less than the minimum wage. I do-- I won't be have time to finish, but I do want folks to know that the young folks have been reaching out to me by email and definitely vocalizing that they are not in support of having the minimum law changed. And I'm proud of all the young folks in my district who have been reaching out to me to support them and support the decisions that were made at the ballot box. Thank you, and I yield the rest of my time.

ARCH: Senator Guereca, you're recognized to speak.

GUERECA: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning colleagues. Good morning Nebraskans. Full house today here in the, the rotunda, full house ain nd the galleries. Welcome to your, to your state capitol. This is where your work is done. The senators on this floor are elected by you across the state, and come here and deliberate

important matters that affect you every single day. I rise in support of LB415. I appreciate Senator Ballard's effort to obviously do some cleanup on this last year's overwhelming ballot initiative. I rise in opposition to AM770. I think a lot, a lot of conversation has happened on, on, on the floor today, talking about the will of the voters and what their intention was, whether or not the changes being made in this amendment affect-- can I get a gavel, Mr. President? We're getting restless, folks, but we're almost there. I think when voters overwhelmingly went to the polls and voted in overwhelming support of this ballot measure, the people they had in mind that they believe deserve this paid sick leave weren't the business executives or the dentists or the doctors. I think the people that they had in mind when they thought of folks that really needed paid sick leave, needed that time to look after their family, to take care of their health, are the very people we're seeing excluded in AM770. Now, I may be wrong, but I'm pretty sure I'm not. I'm pretty sure when voters in every single corner of this state and an overwhelming majority of counties casted a yes vote in support of the ballot measure, they wanted to take care of the single mother who was a waitress in their small town diner. They wanted to take care of the worker who works in the small fabrication shop that might be injured or is looking after their sick child, or has an elderly parent that needs to be taken to a doctor's appointment, or looking after their mother who's sick with cancer and needs to be taken for treatment. Fellow Nebraskans I think that's who you were looking out for. You were looking after the person who goes to work every single day, who works hard, who wants to provide their family a decent life, but you just need a little help. I think when the citizens of this state voted to support the referendum, they wanted to give their fellow Nebraskans just a little help, a few hours a day to make sure that their family is taken care of, that they feel like they can go to the doctor's appointment to get that check-in to make sure nothing serious is happening to them. That's who we're here to support. That's who fellow Nebraskans in every single corner of this state overwhelmingly voted to support. Their neighbor, who just needs a little help. And that's what the referendum provided. Five days. Just a little help. If we look to other states that have implemented similar measures, we're not seeing massive losses. We're seeing folks on average take two additional sick days per year. That's it. Two days over the entire year. Two days to make sure that they can take care of their family without losing wage. It's estimated that in 2023, Nebraskans lost out on \$173 million in wages by having to take unpaid time off to take care of their families. That's \$173 million not in our economy, not going to our tax base, not helping address our

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budgetary shortfall. Everyday Nebraskans just wanting to be OK. And the voters wanted to make sure that their neighbors got a little bit of help.

ARCH: Time, Senator.

GUERECA: Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Andersen would like to recognize some special guests, 75 fourth grade students from Palisades Elementary in Omaha. They are located in the south balcony. Students, please rise and be recognized by your Legislature. Senator Quick, you are recognized to speak.

QUICK: Thank you, Mr. President. And I know last week that we talked about this a little bit, and I think it was Senator Dungan that mentioned the different districts and how many voters in those districts had voted for the paid sick leave. And in District 35, it was 80.8% of the voters voted for that. And that is more than I received for-- in my election. So I think mine was around 50 point something percent or 51%. So that-- I think the voters did understand what they were voting for. And it was important to them to have that paid sick leave. I want to talk a little bit about some of the barriers that working families have. So I know that for, for starters, you know, maybe in some of these smaller businesses, you know, depending on, you know, how their business does, it could be low pay that they face. It could be that for even a larger employer. So some of these employees are making, they're not making a great amount of money. So living paycheck to paycheck is, is an issue for them. And just one, one day of lost pay or two days of lost pay, or say they're, they're off for, for a whole week with an illness, that could cost them-- could be an issue for them on making a house payment or a car payment or paying for a car repair. Because most people who live in, in lower income levels don't drive brand new cars. They actually drive cars that, that, that are high maintenance and need, need care. One of the other areas that is a barrier for working families is childcare. And I know if, if, if someone goes to work and they get a call from the, from the daycare-- [AUDIO MALFUNCTION] sick, you need to come and take them home, that's another issue. So now that employee has to leave work, they have to go get their child and take them home and care for them that day. And that could be a-- without paid sick leave, that's the lost day of employment or lost day of work, paid work. And so the-- this paid sick leave is really important to a lot of our working families. It would, it could be the difference between them actually being able to provide for their families and-- or putting

food on the table. And so I think this is a truly important issue for, for our working families across the state. I was going to-- I'm going to talk a little bit about also some of my work experiences. So for some of you that don't know, I've worked several jobs over my lifetime. I-- it's always been blue collar work. I worked right out of high school. I worked at a grain elevator. We did not have paid sick leave there. I can't recall if I was sick or not, but it would have been important to me if I had needed it. I also worked building houses for a while. We built component houses. I also worked for a couple different farmers. So I worked for a, a big feedlot farm operation around Grand Island. I was on the farm crew. We worked pretty much seven days a week. I think I figured out my hourly rate one time. We were salaried there, but my hourly rate was less than a dollar an hour that I was making for the hours that I put in over that time I worked there. And then, of course, I worked for a sand and gravel operation. We did have five pa-- five days of paid sick leave. And I did utilize those days. There were some days that I, if I didn't feel well, they didn't want me to work, at work either, because then you just gets everybody else sick. So I would, I would have that opportunity to stay home if I was sick. And then the job that I had for the last 28 years, I worked at the power plant in Grand Island. I was started out unloading coal trains and running a dozer and I also went into maintenance, became one of the welders there. Now, one of the things that we did have while I was working there is we did have paid sick leave. And we, we could carry ours over. That was really very beneficial for my family to have that. We were very fortunate to have something like that. I know even with my wife, she had a few hours of paid sick leave, but it was through like a disability type sick leave. So it was a little different avenue for her. And so I, I just want to say that I am opposed to LB-- or AM770 and I'll listen to more debate on LB415. But at this time I can't support that we're going to take away the will of the voters by removing that. So thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Hallstrom, you're recognized to speak.

HALLSTROM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of LB415 and AM770. I think I'd like to provide a little historical perspective and perhaps take a trip down memory lane for the body and hopefully be able to sprinkle some rhetor-- the rhetoric that's been expressed on the floor regarding the will of the voters with a small dose of reality. I certainly respect the voters' decision on Initiative 436, the paid sick leave measure, and the five and seven days for small and larger employers. But I also respect the voters' decision back in

2004, when they amended Article III-2 of the state constitution. Now, that specific amendment, which Senator Conrad conveniently read in part, entrusted and authorized the Legislature pursuant to Initiative 418 to modify statutory enactments by the people, except and only with a vote of two thirds of the Legislature. So it's important to note that citizens' statutory initiatives are subject to legislative adjustment, and it is not at all unprecedented for the Legislature to do so. The case in point is from 2020, Initiative 430, entitled and put together a statutory citizen initiative regarding the Nebraska Race Track Gaming Act, and it was pertaining to gambling at licensed racetracks with licensed gaming operations. What was originally 9 sections of law, as I recall in the statutory ballot initiative is now 21 sections. And there are a number of substantive provisions that came about from LB561, which, by the way, was enacted in 2021, the very next year after adoption of the Initiative 430. Some of the things that we've done, we struck language regarding the pay of the commissioners to allow them \$1,000 per month; we changed the gambling age from 19 to 21 for horse races, and we defined "authorized sporting event" to have some exclusions, which I'll come back to in just a moment. Some of the more substantive things that I think if you were a voter going into the booth and deciding that you wanted to support games of chance and expanded gambling at racetracks in Nebraska are the fact that we subsequently took it upon ourselves to prohibit the use of credit cards to place wagers and for games of chance. Now, I don't necessarily disagree with that, but certainly I don't think the voters, when they went into the booth, were thinking, my gosh, I use my credit card for everything and I'm not going to be able to use it because of the Legislature will change what I thought I was voting on. And the second thing, and perhaps more importantly, is Senator Lathrop at that time brought an amendment, and Senator Patty Pansing Brooks passionately advocated for an amendment, that essentially said, we cannot place sports wagers on intercollegiate athletics that occur in the state of Nebraska. So put yourself in the position of a voter in the booth saying, I want unfettered expansion of gambling. And at the same time, I'm going to find out, to my surprise, that the Legislature took it upon themselves to outlaw my ability to place a sports wager on my beloved Huskers whenever they're playing at home, or pick another colle-- intercollegiate team in the state of Nebraska. So I don't think it's as simple to say that we're defying the will of the voters. We do need to put up guardrails. I find it interesting for those that are using the argument that we're defying the will of the voters to say, well, ten isn't right, but maybe four is. I support the willingness to compromise and to get consensus on this issue, but I

think that runs counter to the argument that we've heard on the floor. And going back very quickly in the seconds that I have left. If you look at the Lathrop amendment that I referenced, that amendment was supported by both Senator John and Machaela Cavanaugh, and when the bill was passed on Final Reading, they were joined by Senator Megan Hunt. I hope to get on the, the mic later to finish my thoughts in this regard. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Moser, you're recognized to speak.

MOSER: Good, good morning, colleagues, and thank you, Mr. President. In our discussion so far we've focused on the economics of working people. And I'm glad we have people in the Legislature that are champions for unions and for people who work for someone else. Everyone needs somebody to speak for them and to make sure that their feelings are heard. But my perspective is from a business owner. And when I'm told by the state that I have to pay a minimum wage no matter how much work the employee does or how good of employee he is, and then I have to give him sick leave, again without merit; but yet during that sick time, that employee does no work. So it's not an economic benefit to the employer. So he has to factor that in as to whether he's going to hire employees in the first place. Those are all added costs, and you may be hesitant to hire more employees. You may be more inclined to use some online service, maybe a temp agency, maybe an independent contractor. Maybe even family. Things don't happen in a vacuum. Business owners are not bottomless wishing wells full of money for the benefit of their employees. They appreciate their employees. They need employees. But they expect their employees to do-- be able to complete certain tasks so that the business can stay viable. You know, the, the business model for the business has to stay intact. And I think if more of us had small businesses where we were responsible, we'd be less inclined to be adding unilateral costs onto the backs of small businesses. So I support AM770, I support LB415, and if Senator Hallstrom would like whatever time I have remaining, I would yield that to him.

ARCH: Senator Hallstrom, two minute, 15.

HALLSTROM: Thank you, Senator Moser. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the other thing that I'd like to note for the record is that when we look at these statutory initiatives, and I think it's the underpinning of why we have the provision that I referenced in Article III of the state constitution allowing the Legislature with a higher threshold, a two thirds vote, to make changes to statutory citizen initiatives. And

that's because, dependent upon the manner in which the citizen initiative is fashioned or, or put together, it's a take it or leave it. As I looked at the initiative initially, I thought, boy, it's strange that we'd have a 20 employee threshold. Family medical leave has 50 for exemptions. Thought there would be a larger threshold at the bottom level. Also would have anticipated that there would have been some type of exclusion for the truly small employers. And I think we've had some discussion here this morning, which has been good in terms of why the justification for an exclusion. I would venture to guess that if the initiative had been fashioned with a ten or fewer employee exemption, that the voters would have still overwhelmingly approved that. And I would, I guess I would look forward to see that if we have amendments, and Senator Cavanaugh has apparently already filed one. But if we have amendments in, in years to come, or perhaps during this debate, to increase the 5 day threshold for paid sick leave to 10 days, and 7 to 14, if some folks will change their tune and decide that that's a good amendment that we ought to support, even though that too, on the basis that we've heard today, would defy the will of the voters. And with that, I'll yield the remainder of my time back to the chair.

ARCH: Senator DeKay would like to recognize some guests from the Elkhorn Public Power Districts, five-- Power District, five members. They are located in the south balcony. Please rise and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Meyer, you're recognized to speak.

MEYER: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise today in support of LB415. I think it's important that we honor the intent and the vote of the people. And I would like to relinquish the balance of my time to Senator Hallstrom.

ARCH: Senator Hallstrom, four minutes, 45.

HALLSTROM: Thank you, Senator Meyer. And thank, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I'll talk just a little bit more detail about the, the role of the small business employer in our economy, the fact that the paid sick leave types of issues are much more burdensome on those smaller employers. I think it's fairly obvious that when you have fewer than ten employees, you don't have the capacity to fill the void when someone misses. Now, that doesn't mean that employers aren't allowing those folks who may be sick and have to miss work to stay at home and recuperate. But there's a difference between paid leave and unpaid leave. And particularly for those small employers, if you make

the change to paid leave, they're going to incur that regular payroll cost, and they don't have the, the magnitude of employees to fill the void. So they may have to go out into the workforce and find someone to come in temporarily, and they are going to have to make payment to those individual replacement workers on top of paying their usual wage to the employee who is out on sick leave. So there's a double whammy that occurs without question. Larger employees are probably-- employers are probably better served to fill the void because they have more manpower or womanpower in terms of the number of employees that they have. And if you look at just the dollar figures, if I do my math real quickly, if you have someone that's making \$25 an hour, an eight hour a day, that's \$200 times five days, that's \$1,000 a year per employee. If you have ten employees, that's \$10,000. And that does make a significant difference to small employers. Thus, in looking at the guardrails and looking at potential compromises, and again, I do appreciate Senator Cavanaugh coming forward with his proposal. I don't know that I'm willing to, to make that change, but I'm certainly willing to entertain it and appreciate that we're having continued discussion and dialog on potential issues to reach consensus and move forward on this bill. And with that, I would return the remainder of my time to the chair.

ARCH: Senator Hughes, you're recognized to speak.

HUGHES: Thank you. Chairman. I rise, let's see, in support of LB415, the amendment AM770, and against the MO111 to bracket. I hear a lot about you know, we're circumventing the will of the voters. I'm just going to tell a little bit of a story. I have three kids and all three of them did detasseling work in the summers, each of them a minimum of three years summer work detasseling, three or four years. And I can pretty much guarantee that when people voted for this last November, they did not assume that the kids that are out detasseling for three or four weeks in the summer would be accruing sick time. When I've talked to people about it, they're like, whoa, that's not what this was intended. This was more intended if I'm working part time, 30 hours a week, you know, all year round, something of that nature. But my kids didn't need to accrue sick time while they're detasseling. If they didn't feel good, they just didn't go to work that day and they don't get paid. So I appreciate that we're exempting the seasonal workers. I think that's an important piece to this bill. And then the other piece that I do support with amendment is having the, the ten, the business ten or smaller. And I am doing this specifically for a few businesses in my district that have actually reached out to me. They own a very small business, they're barely getting by as is. Their

full-time people are the owners. And then they, they, they use a lot of part time and a lot of them are high school kids also. And they're just struggling as is. And by this, the mandate of now you've got to add that increase to their costs to do this sick time when the job fully you know, it was clear when they signed up that they weren't getting sick time is, is-- to me just doesn't make sense to make that. So I'm, I'm happy about that piece of the amendment, the seasonal-- elimination of seasonal workers and then that the smaller ten person businesses or less, which again, directly impacts my district. And so that's why I'll be voting for this going forward. So thank you, and I yield back my time.

ARCH: Senator Rountree, you're recognized to speak.

ROUNTREE: Thank you, Mister President. And good morning, colleagues, and good morning to all that are tuned in with us today here for the Unicameral hearings and our floor discussion. I rise, I support LB415 as it does access the clean-up bill. I also support Senator McKinney's motion to bracket this until 6-9-'25. And LB-- AM770 has some issues and I just want to talk just a little bit. But before I go into my talk about our bill today. I just want to take this time to honor my father, Mr. Jesse Rountree, deceased. Today is two years that he left us, but he left us with a legacy. That legacy, my dad was a construction worker who raised ten children. My dad, I don't recall ever taking a day of sick leave working in construction, but I know many times he went to work sick. But realizing what he had to do to take care of his family, he pressed his way through. I remember when he was making \$2 an hour and when his wages went up to \$2.25 an hour, and the last wage I remember him making was \$4.25 an hour because I looked at his pay stubs. And, you know, we've come a long way since then. We've put a lot of things in place for a lot of our workers, and I appreciate these rights that we have. So, dad, thank you for raising us and thank you for your legacy. And so I rise now as we talk about this particular bill. I do take time, as most of you do, our inboxes are flooded with emails from our constituents, and I do get a chance to read those, it takes some time. But I want my constituents to know that they are heard when they reach out. So I'm going to take time just to read a couple of those this morning regarding this particular bill. There are many, but just these two. And for the record, I'll put Mary Kelly's [PHONETIC] name down. She lives in a district down in Bellevue. And her email reads, Dear Senator Rountree, she said, please oppose amendment LB415. Now these emails have a lot of the same type language. She said voters overwhelmingly approved Initiative 436 granting Nebraska workers paid sick leave. We knew what we voted for.

We do not want Legislatures to carve out exceptions to paid sick leave. We definitely don't want employers retaliating against workers for using paid sick leave. Please respect the will of the Nebraska voters and do not support the amendments to this particular bill that has a, in their perspective, a detrimental effect. So that's from Mary Kelly. So, Mary, I want you to know this morning that I do hear you. I read the emails and you are in the record. So we have a second one from over in Papillion, another part of the district said, Dear Senator Rountree, please oppose amendment to LB415. Said this is going against the will of the people. So our constituents out there watch. And I was surprised that they watch every word that we speak, every move that we make here in the Unicameral. And for some it's, it's every day. So I wanted to get those two on the record. I have many, many more, and I'm not going to go the rest of the way, but I'll let all of my constituents know that yes, I hear you. And we're stating in that so that the rest of the 48 senators that are here, plus all supporters that are here, do hear you and your voices are heard. That's one of the greatest things that people want to be and they want to be heard. And then just as I get ready to finalize that, just for others that are looking at the bills, that I think for me, the most offensive part of this portion of the bill is that it removes the right for employees to bring claims against bosses who violate the initiative. If someone is denied sick leave by their boss in defiance of the laws voted on by Nebraskans, then those employees would have no recourse whatsoever. So us about protecting those rights of our individuals, our employees. But as we come-- and I was thinking, because I was home in North Carolina over the weekend visiting my mother who'd had had surgery. I see them in the yellow. But I love that sausage. Amen. We had hogs that we killed every Thanksgiving and we made sausage. So yes, I had my share while I was at home. And as I was eating, I was laughing, I said because in this Legislature we always say, this is how the sausage is made. Amen. So let's make good sausage for our constituents and for the people of Nebraska. And with that, my light is about to turn red. I think I've spoken what I want to speak, so thank you, Madam President. Amen.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Rountree. Senator-- speaker Arch, you are recognized for an announcement.

ARCH: Thank you, Madam President. I, I want to just give people a heads up. We have to do something at about 11:50 today, and we need to take up a, a motion to suspend the rules. And I want to explain a little bit what that is. The reason I'm saying this is because in order for this suspension of the rules to pass, we need to have 30, 30

votes. And so please don't disappear before, before adjournment. But Senator Sanders has filed a motion to suspend Rule 3, Section 14, to permit the cancellation. There's, there's one individual in a hearing this afternoon for a gubernatorial appointment that is-- that apparently is not available to serve in that, in that role. So with that, we need to suspend the rules to cancel that individual's confirmation hearing this afternoon. So we're going to take that up at about 11:50, but we'll continue this debate un--until that time. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Speaker Arch. Senator Dorn, you're recognized. Senator McKinney, you're recognized. Senator Hunt, you're recognized.

HUNT: Thank you, Madam President. You know, colleagues, I rise not just as a senator, but as a business owner. I've owned a business in my district for about 20 years. We've had times when we had 15 employees. I've had times when I had one employee. Had times I had 19 employees. You know, I've-- you know, we've had times when we owed hundreds of thousands of dollars, there were times when we made hundreds of thousands. I understand the rollercoaster of business ownership. And I understand how hard it is for small business owners in Nebraska, and in no part because of-- no small part because of, you know, different requirements and things that the Legislature puts on small business owners, usually in favor of bigger corporations and businesses while campaigning and paying lip service to small business owners. But then when we get in here and have opportunities to vote, we really just do things that help big business. And, you know, I feel that, and I know that, you know, Senator Strommen, Senator Moser, Senator Jacobson, there are numerous other business owners in this body, senator Raybould. And we take our experiences as small business owners, and frankly, we vote very differently. You know, we've come to different conclusions from our experience owning small businesses. And, you know, as someone who's hired staff, who's managed budget, budgets, who's managed payroll, who's built companies from the ground up, who's lost companies, I'm here to tell you that this bill does not support businesses. It undermines the will of the people. It creates confusion. And it sends the message that the Legislature knows what's best. You know, some of you who stood up here and talked about, you know, the government tells me what I have to pay my employees, no matter how hard they work, no matter how good they are. And now they're telling me I got to let them take sick days, quote unquote, also unearned. Imagine being one of your employees, Senators and sitting here listening to you say things like that. How insulting that is to the work that you're asking people to do for you, to make you

money so that you can be here undermining their rights and their will. How insulting and embarrassing for you. I think that if you can't afford to stay in business if your employee takes a day off, you should just say that if your shop is going to close if someone is sick one day, maybe you've got bigger problems. As a business owner, I believe the most valuable asset is our people. And when your employees are sick, or worse, when their kids are sick, or people that they have to take care of are sick. Every employer knows that productivity, morale, and even the customer experience, even the sales suffers if we expect our employees to just tough it out. Paid sick leave isn't a burden. It's an investment in a healthy workforce, and it's investment in long term stability. And for me as a business owner, it's an investment in my bottom line. I don't have to stand up on the microphone and say, you know, talk about my employees being lazy or unqualified or doesn't matter how hard they work the government tells me what I have to pay them, which, by the frickin way, is not very much money, if these things are such a limitation to you, maybe you should ask what kind of business you're running that you can't recruit top talent, that you can't recruit people to work in your shop who you think are hardworking, who you think deserve to be there, that you would like to pay a fair wage. Frankly, very humiliating to admit that out loud. But here's what this bill does. It chips away at policy that Nebraskans overwhelmingly passed just months ago. It redefines key terms. It narrows the scope, and it introduces ambiguity to business owners and to workers. It walks back what voters said they wanted, and it's obstruction. We hear the argument a lot, small businesses can't handle this. But I am a small business. I've been there. I've done it all. I've run a service business, retail businesses, I've operated a co-working space. And I can tell you from experience the businesses that are ready for the future, the businesses that will survive in this state are the ones that treat their workers with dignity. You want to attract talent, you want to retain staff, you want to reduce turnover, you want to make money? Paid sick leave helps with all of that. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Hunt. Senator Dungan, you're recognized.

DUNGAN: Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon colleagues. I once again encourage you to vote yes on the bracket motion and no on AM770. As I stated before, and it's been a while since I've spoken here this morning, so we've had a lot of people in the queue, but as I stated before, there are a number of things contained in the committee amendment that I am actually not opposed to. But there are portions of it that I am, and it sounds like to me that it's primarily the

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate March 26, 2025
Rough Draft

inclusion of LB698 that is causing a lot of the strife, at least for myself and some of my colleagues with regards to the committee amendment. So I was wondering if Senator Kauth, the chair of the committee, would be willing to yield to some questions?

DeBOER: Senator Kauth, will you yield?

KAUTH: Yes.

DUNGAN: Thank you, Senator Kauth. So I just-- I'm, I'm looking at the committee statement here. And is it fair to say that there were more, I guess, opponents or more generalized opposition to LB698 than there was to the underlying bill of LB415?

KAUTH: I didn't count exactly each one I, I-- probably a general sense was that it was a more difficult bill, yes.

DUNGAN: OK. And I, I know that I spoke about this earlier too, and I'm kind of hearing this through other stakeholders, but my understanding is there was some negotiations that happened during the interim with regards to, I guess, a clean-up bill or compromise as it pertained to terminology and definitions for the paid sick leave. Is it your understanding that that sort of compromise amendment was contained in the original LB415?

KAUTH: Are you talking-- Say that again, are you're talking about LB698?

DUNGAN: Sorry, I can, I can, I can put that more plainly. Yes. So LB415, to the best of your knowledge, the underlying bill, Senator Ballard's bill, that represents the compromise between some of the stakeholders with regards to the paid sick leave initiative. Is that right?

KAUTH: You'd have to ask Senator Ballard that question. As far as I-- as-- when it was presented in committee, it was more-- there were parameters that needed to be put on it that had not been clearly explained in the actual ballot.

DUNGAN: And, and that was for Senator Ballard's LB415.

KAUTH: Correct.

DUNGAN: OK. Do you-- To the best of your knowledge, and maybe you weren't a part of the conversations, but to the best of your knowledge

does LB698, which is incorporated in the committee package, represent a compromise bill, or is that what was not agreed to by various stakeholders with regards to cleanup language on the paid sick leave?

KAUTH: Well, I think you'd have to ask Senator Strommen that. As far as, again, what we were presented in committee was that that was he had worked with several stakeholders and, and discussed how to make the, the parameters of the ballot initiative doable.

DUNGAN: OK. And I've had brief conversations with both Senator Ballard and Senator Strommen about that, but I, I might follow up on that. Can you let us know, was there any, I guess, concern that you had about whether or not the inclusion of LB698 was going to, I guess, create drag, for lack of a better word, on LB415 given how contentious that is as a bill being added in as an amendment?

KAUTH: No. When I talked with both Senator Ballard and Senator Strommen, my first question was, what is your vote count? How does this look? And both of them assured me that they, they had the 33 votes that they needed. I had them compare their votes to make sure that, that one would not knock off the other. And it appeared to be no problem.

DUNGAN: Did you have any conversations with any of the opponents on the underlying LB698 before including it as part of the package for LB415?

KAUTH: No.

DUNGAN: OK. Did you, I guess, have any concerns about whether or not LB698 kind of went it against some of the compromise that had happened during the interim between various stakeholders with the paid sick leave initiative?

KAUTH: No, not at all.

DUNGAN: OK. Thank you for answering questions. I appreciate it, Senator Kauth. So, colleagues, the reason I asked these questions is, again, I think there's always a debate, a difference between the process that we object to and the content that we object to. We're hearing a lot about the content, and I think that's very important. I think we can talk a lot about whether or not the underlying LB415 or the inclusion of LB698 are problematic. But I guess part of my issue that I have is this inclusion that we continue to see of contentious bills that are not prioritized individually, coming up to debate on

the floor as amendments being tacked on to other bills that might not have the same debate otherwise. We've seen this before this year on some other bills, where the underlying bill that goes through General File, for example is relatively noncontentious and bipartisan. And then amendments can become particularly problematic. And I think that it's important moving forward that when we have those really hyper contentious issues we debate them up or down. Certainly we're allowed to amend things into other bills and create packages, and I think that's a way that we get things done. But I do think that the inclusion of LB698, which to my understanding, all parties know--

DeBOER: Time, Senator.

DUNGAN: --was going to be contentious, is problematic as an inclusion. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Dungan. Senator Strommen, you're next in the queue.

STROMMEN: Thank you, Madam President. I just wanted to reiterate some of the conversations that we've been having here this morning. I just wanted to reiterate kind of what Senator Hallstrom had been talking about, that this isn't the first time that we've changed language in a ballot initiative. During the 2020 election, Nebraskans overwhelmingly passed Initiative 429 and Initiative 430 to authorize and regulate gambling at racetracks, with both receiving over 65% of the vote. Initiative 431, which deals with revenue raised from such gambling passed with over 68% of the vote. During the 2021 legislative session, Senator Tom Briese brought LB561 to modify the ballot language. Although many of the changes were clarifications and nonsubstantive, the Legislature did make several significant changes. Among these changes struck language providing that commissioners would serve without compensation to ensure pay of \$1,000 per month; changed the gambling age from 19 to 21 years of age for horse races; defines authorized sporting events for wagering and excludes wagers of fantasy sport content, minor league sporting event, sporting events at high school level or below, regardless of the age of the individual participant, or any sporting event excluded by the commission; excluded proxy betting and betting by a list of other individuals; prohibits use of credit cards for gaming; creates additional restrictions on locations of gaming. Senator Steve Lathrop brought AM1427 to specifically prohibit wagering on interstate collegiate sporting events in which an interstate collegiate or university team is a participant. So to pretend that this has never happened before is

false. We have made changes. We do it every day here in the Legislature. We have bills that come into committee, and in committee we will look at those bills and decide whether they are in the best interest of the people, or whether they're not in the best interest of the people. And sometimes those bills need to be changed. Sometimes we make significant changes to them. If they are egregious, we don't let them get out of committee. So this isn't something new for us. Pretending like it is. I think would be a false representation of what we do here. Thank you.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Strommen. Senator Storm, Storm would like to recognize four officials from Schuyler Public Schools, the superintendent and three school board members. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator John Cavanaugh, you're next in the queue.

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, colleagues. I didn't think I'd get to talk again. So happy to get a chance. So just again, where we're at, we're on the division of the question, which I asked for. Meaning that the amendment that's on the board right now is the one that I think goes too far in rolling back the will of the voters. And a lot of folks have talked about a number of reasons for that. And then the other am that will be up after this is the one that's more of the compromise that Senator Ballard worked out, and then there's a few other bills. And so the reason for the division is that if you think we need to make some of the changes that are reasonable and help facilitate the will of the people without having some broader consequences that were unintended, then you can vote for the AM771, which is not on the board. But if you think that we should not wholesale repeal or undermine the will of the people based off of our own decision and judgment, then you can vote against AM770. So we're giving you the option to make some constraints, some changes, without overruling the will of 75% of Nebraskans. And I think-- I appreciate what Senator Strommen was just saying. And I heard Senator Hallstrom talking about this earlier. The Constitution gives us the ability to change ballot initiatives, being-- ballot initiative being statutory changes that the voters have approved. The voters undertake that because the Legislature has failed to act. So there's a number of ballot initiatives that have come through recently, and people say, oh my God, these go too far. I can tell you, we've tried, the Legislature has tried to expand Medicaid, to legalize medical marijuana, to expand access to games of chance, and the Legislature chose not to do that. And so the voters really wanted that and passed those things overwhelmingly. And I was a party to the conversations that Senator

Strommen was just talking about on the expanded gambling changes. There was some need to, to make some, some technical changes to those ballot initiatives to make them actually work. And that was still-- the fight we had there was to respect, again, the spirit of the ballot initiative. So the spirit of the voters to not say, I didn't like this, the chair of that committee at that time, the chair of the General Affairs Committee, was Senator Tom Brieese, who is now the Treasurer. And I have tremendous respect for Tom Brieese because of how he behaved in this situation. Tom Brieese was a person who was opposed to expanded gambling. But when that came to his committee, he made a sincere and honest effort to make it workable and to not undermine the intention and the will of the voters. And so the reason that those-- some of those amendments that Senator Strommen mentioned, like the interstate gambling part, I specifically was involved in negotiation of that. And the reason we had to do that was there were people who did not want to respect the will of the voters and wanted to erode some of the votes there, and that was a compromise to stop the further erosion and to get enough votes to actually give voice to the voters' will. So there were technical changes that needed to be made to make sure that it went into effect. There was a desire by those in the body to explicitly ban sports betting. They did not think that that was something the voters intended. We had this very similar conversation. Voters didn't vote for sports betting, voters-- the ballot initiative clearly allowed sports betting. There was a conversation about what the voters meant to do when they voted for it. And so we had a very similar conversation. And that's how we ended up with that compromise about the interstate, out-of-state sports thing. But again, that was with an eye toward respecting the will of the voters. And again, Senator Tom Brieese was involved as a person who did not-- was not in favor of expanded gambling. But he very dutifully executed his obligation to effectuate the will of the voters as chair of the General Affairs Committee, and shepherded that bill through in the least change to the will of voters as possible. That's not what we're talking about here. We're talking about a bill that rolls back the things that voters implemented because people don't like it. Because you don't like--e Mike Moser, Senator Moser was up here talking about how he doesn't like the government telling him how much he has to pay people and how much time we have to give them off. That's a policy question that was decided by the voters. We are here trying to make a decision about how to effectuate that will and to not disturb it if we can avoid it. That's the conversation we should be having, not what you think this should look like. We had our chance, folks. It was before the voters talked about it. So that's why I'm opposed to AM770.

It goes too far. It is attempting to insert our judgment in the place of the voters. We're here to exercise our judgment in respect of our voters, to attempt to help be honest, faithful servants to the will of our voters, the people who sent us here. We represent them. We do not represent ourselves. We do not represent our businesses. We--

DeBOER: Time, Senator.

J. CAVANAUGH: --represent the voters of our district, and they voted for this. Thank you, Madam President.

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator John Cavanaugh. Senator Michaela Cavanaugh, you're recognized.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Madam President. I would honestly just echo everything that Senator John Cavanaugh said. And I would yield the remainder of my time to Senator Conrad.

DeBOER: Senator Conrad, your yielded four minutes, 48 seconds.

CONRAD: Thank you. Madam President, I would ask Senator Strommen to yield to a question if he's available.

DeBOER: Senator Strommen, would you yield?

STROMMEN: Yes.

CONRAD: Thank you. Senator. Just to get to the heart of the matter, when you entered the ballot box in November 2024, or perhaps you voted by mail, I guess, did you vote for or against the paid sick leave initiative?

STROMMEN: I voted against it.

CONRAD: And why was that, Senator?

STROMMEN: I voted against it because the individuals in our area of the country need jobs. And I knew as a business owner that in order to offset costs, it becomes extremely difficult to look at what you're doing within a business and decide, do I have the ability to raise prices? And if I don't have the ability to raise prices, how am I going to offset my costs? A lot of times what happens is that those individuals are the ones, the workers that we desperately need in western Nebraska are the ones that suffer because of initiatives like this.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate March 26, 2025
Rough Draft

CONRAD: So, Senator--

STROMMEN: I wanted to make sure that that wasn't going to happen, and that the people of western Nebraska weren't going to suffer because of that. We want people working.

CONRAD: Right. I agree.

STROMMEN: We want people working in District 47. I don't want to find the people in a place where they can't have a job, and I wanted to ensure that that wouldn't happen for them.

CONRAD: Well, Senator, it sounds like you had quite a bit of deliberation deciding how to cast your vote, which I would expect. My, my question to you is why do you think other Nebraska voters did not have the same level of discernment that you have?

STROMMEN: I think everybody is going to end up in the same situation. Like I said, cost of goods sold. You have two options. You're either going to increase your costs--

CONRAD: Senator, you did not answer the question, this is my time. Why do you think other Nebraska voters did not have the same level of discernment that you do?

STROMMEN: I think I just asked that question. Did--

CONRAD: Did-- you did not.

STROMMEN: --I not just answer, did I not just answer your question?

CONRAD: No, you did not.

STROMMEN: OK, well, I'm answering the question, which is I think that people want to work, and this puts them in a position where they may likely find themselves without a job.

CONRAD: Senator, that was not the ballot question before voters. The ballot question before voters was clear. You read it. You understood it. You voted no. Other voters in Nebraska, the vast majority in your district and across the state, read it, understood it, and voted yes. Do you believe that you have more discernment than the average Nebraska voter? And--

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate March 26, 2025
Rough Draft

STROMMEN: I'm, I'm not-- I don't-- I-- You know, I'm not going to pretend to know what the average Nebraska voter thinks.

CONRAD: Well, I think--

STROMMEN: I'm telling you, I'm telling you--

CONRAD: It, it, it---

--what I, what see--

CONRAD: The only indication we have, Senator, is from the election results. If you do not trust the election results, you should resign your position.

STROMMEN: That's fantastic.

CONRAD: Well. It's true. Why does it-- why do you honor election results for your race, but not for ballot initiatives? Tell me the difference.

STROMMEN: Are you comfortable telling your just-- your constituents that you had the opportunity to ensure that they were going to have their jobs, but then voted against something--

CONRAD: Senator, that was not the question, that is not the question before voters, and that was not my question to you today. If you do not have a response, or do not wish to share a response, that's a different story. My question to you is, why do you think you have more discernment than the average voter? My question to you is why do you retain your seat if you honor the will of the voters in regards to your election, but not on ballot initiatives? It's not hard question. That's the crux of the matter before us.

STROMMEN: I, I feel like I've answered your question. Thank you.

CONRAD: OK, I think the record speaks for itself. Thank you, Senator Strommen.

STROMMEN: Thank you.

CONRAD: And to be clear, colleagues, assuming that Nebraska working families, 250,000 Nebraskans, by the way, who work full-time and do not get paid sick time off and need these benefits the most, after trying for over a decade to get some basic sick leave, some basic safe

leave, some basic family leave through this Legislature, the business community and the Legislature told the voters and the advocates who work together for those modest benefits to pound sand. So the voters took matters into their own hands. They met a very lofty requirement to secure ballot access. They ran a campaign and they passed the measure.

DeBOER: Time, Senator. Thank you, Senator Conrad and Strommen. Senator Brandt would like to recognize eight 9th through 12th grade students and two teachers from Thayer Central High School in Hebron, Nebraska. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Dungan would like to recognize 25 ninth, ninth grade teachers, students, two teachers, one sponsor from the Arts and Humanities Focus Program at LPS in Lincoln, Nebraska. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Madam President, pursuant to Speaker Arch's previous announcement, I have an item before the Legislature, a communication from the governor. Dear Mr. President, Speaker Arch, members of the Legislature, on January 23, 2025, Josh Moenning was appointed to the Nebraska Tourism Commission this morning. Has since moved out of the district he was to represent and can no longer serve. Accordingly, I hereby respectfully request you withdraw him from consideration for confirmation. Please contact my office if you have any questions. It's signed, Sincerely, Jim Pillen, Governor. Pursuant to that communication, Senator Sanders would move to suspend Rule 3, Section 14, to permit the cancellation of public hearing.

DeBOER: Senator Sanders, you are recognized to open on your motion.

SANDERS: Thank you, Madam President. Rule 3, Section 14 requires that there will be at least seven days advance notice to the public of a hearing, and that the hearing not be canceled within the seven days. We scheduled eight appointments confirmation hearing in the government committee for this afternoon. After giving public notice of the hearing, I was informed over the weekend by the Governor's Office, Office that one of the appointees had moved and no longer eligible for that appointment. For that reason, we will not be conducting a hearing on that appointment because it has been withdrawn. We will-- we still intend to hold our hearing on the other seven appointments. I would ask that the body vote green on this motion to suspend the rules for this purpose. Thank you, Madam President.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office

Floor Debate March 26, 2025

Rough Draft

DeBOER: Thank you, Senator Sanders. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Sanders, you are welcome to close on your motion. Senator Sanders waives closing. The question before the body is the suspension of the rules for the cancellation of a public hearing. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 42 ayes, 0 nays on the motion, Madam President.

DeBOER: The rules are suspended.

CLERK: Madam president, pursuant to that motion, the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee would give notice of the cancellation of a public hearing. That's all I have on that item.

DeBOER: Items for the record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Madam president, your Committee on Enrollment Review reports LB501, LB144, LB168, LB177, LB230, LB248, LB266, LB290, LB325, LB478 as correctly engrossed and placed on Final Reading. Additionally, your Committee on Health and Human Services, chaired by Senator Hardin, reports LB48, LB274, LB380 to General File, some having committee amendments. Your Committee on Urban Affairs, chaired by Senator McKinney reports LB288 to General File with committee amendments. Your Committee on Revenue, chaired by Senator von Gillern, reports LB712 to General File. Amendments to be printed from Senator Dungan to LB22A, Speaker Arch to LB346, Senator Storer to LB646, and Senator Dungan-- John Cavanaugh to LB415. The Natural Resources Committee committee report for an appointment to the Game and Parks Commission. New LR, LR87 from Senator Andersen, and LR88 from Senator Clouse. Those will both be laid over. Name adds, Senator. Bostar, name added to LB391, Senator McKeon to LB-- name withdrawn from LB646. Notice that the Appropriations Committee will hold an executive session at 1:30 in room 1003. Appropriations exec session 130. In room 1003 and the Exec Board will meet in room 2102 upon adjournment. Exec Board 2102 on adjournment. Finally, Madam President, a priority motion. Senator Hallstrom would move to adjourn the body until Thursday, March 27 at 9:00 am.

DeBOER: Colleagues, you've heard the motion. All those in favor say aye. All those opposed say nay. We are adjourned.