

March 25, 1983

LB 503

program and the branch line revitalization activities that you are seeking more effective?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Yes, we have a new Director of Economic Development. I have discussed it with him. It was his suggestion, by the way, former Senator Dworak's suggestion that we utilize Department of Roads employees rather than to add that kind of an individual to his staff.

SENATOR NEWELL: I see. So, basically, he is committed and enthusiastic about trying to get something done in this regard?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Senator, former Senator Dworak understands the importance of revitalization of the branch lines and he will carry out the mandates of the Legislature. He is not looking for work, of course, or trying to take over somebody else's authority but I visited with him and several other persons along with the Department of Roads officials and I have indication of support.

SENATOR NEWELL: Okay. I really don't know whether this is a good idea or not. I have not given it the thought that Senator Schmit has. I will say that Senator Dworak gave me a call, and on the call was LB 503, on the sheet, and I never got back to him, so I don't know whether he wants me to support it or oppose it. Well, until I know better, I think I will just sit down. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER NICHOL: We have four minutes and three speakers. Senator Jacobsen.

SENATOR JACOBSEN: Mr. President and colleagues, I rise, and I will be brief, to be against the advancement of this bill. I don't believe in the state getting into the railroad business at any time, whether it is yesterday or tomorrow. The upbuilding of branch lines is a big problem with all of the railroads and particularly the one that furnishes equipment to the corn country and that is the Burlington and they are not going to build a line unless it is profitable and there will be enough revenue coming from grainloadings in the particular area to build up those bridges where they will stand these loading of 25 to 50 cars which is a must today in the grain business. There is a program at the moment to upgrade one track, one line of track out in central Nebraska that is right in the heart of the corn country and they can get roughly a million dollars from the federal government to do this. I don't believe that the state should appropriate any money to upgrade rail lines. That is not our business and