

the unfortunate death of Senator Kahle, a couple of our colleagues and the Governor were taking off in one of our state airplanes and had an engine catch on fire. The aircraft was old and the engines were adequate, but certainly they needed maintenance. The point I want to make is this, you can't operate any good department without adequate funds. The people in the aviation business are fully aware of the kind of service they get from the Department of Aeronautics. The general public is aware, I'm sure. We have an excellent system of airports across the State of Nebraska. It has been very helpful in bringing industry and business to the state and I think will continue to do so. Without the ability to maintain those airfields and to service the equipment and to provide the kind of auxiliary services that are necessary to the aviation industry, we are not going to be able to attract that new industry. I think it is a good bill, it is overdue. It certainly was a ridiculous provision to allow us to pay the five cents and ask for the two and a half back for 30 years, so I would hope the bill would pass without incident.

PRESIDENT: (Gavel.) Chair recognizes Senator Carsten.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I rise to support the bill with some reluctance. I think that Senator Schmit talked on one of the very key things that we need to be...need to have in the back of our mind. At some point, and not too far distant, we are going to need to look at some aircraft for the state. The other point that I want to make and I rise in somewhat of the same category that Senator Chambers does so often in this body, for the record. I have long felt that many of our private airports in the State of Nebraska, even though they are small, they perform a tremendous service to local areas, that never get any benefit from this tax at all. They have tried, in fact the first two years that I was in this body I tried to get some help for them and was unable to do so. But it is a point that I think we too long have forgotten and should keep that in mind. However, I do support the bill. The cumbersome way in which we handled it was certainly unnecessary. I believe this is the correct way to go. Thank you, Mr. President.