

April 1, 1996

LB 645, 645A, 847, 847A, 1218, 1218A, 1252, 1275  
1336, 1391

to us in this fashion. However, Senator Witek talked about the fact that this is a right to work state and people should not be forced to pay union dues. I would agree, they should not be forced to be paying union dues. However, if you vote for the Dierks amendment, what you're going to do is force the citizens of Nebraska to pay those union dues and I think that's, perhaps, as bad or worse, because this claim then would be paid by General Fund money and that's paid by the taxpayers of the state of Nebraska. So in looking at this issue, my opinion continues to be that the taxpayers of Nebraska should not be paying union dues and I will be voting against the Dierks amendment.

**SPEAKER WITHEM:** Thank you, Senator Preister. I would like to announce that we have 20 fourth graders from Hooper Elementary School in the north balcony, along with their teacher. They are here as guests of Senator Janssen. Could you stand to be recognized, please. I would also indicate that while the Legislature is in session and capable of transacting business, I would propose to sign and do sign Legislative Bills 1252, 1275, 1336, 645, 645A, 847, 847A, 1218, 1218A. Senator Vrtiska to speak on the Dierks amendment.

**SENATOR VRTISKA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the body. I think it's been very well documented here this morning that many of us are certainly confused about the issue because many of us are not union members, don't understand union policy and are, therefore, struggling to determine which, in fact, is the best policy. I have a tendency to sort of follow the lead that Senator Preister's given and that is why is this an issue that's being settled in the Legislature when there are other avenues rather than having to have the state make up the pay that that there is an appearance may be due her? So I'm a little unsettled about how to vote on this issue simply because it doesn't seem that everybody, or the majority of us, are probably that knowledgeable about the mechanics of the system that the union has in place and that you agree to when you join the union. So it's a difficult issue, one that I'm certainly not comfortable with, as I know many of the people on this floor aren't comfortable with. But it is a matter that...it is a matter of fact that it doesn't seem proper that the taxpayers of the state should have to make up the money for a disagreement that evolved over a period of time between a worker and the union, so I'm not sure how I'm going to vote. I'm trying to decide, but I'm not very comfortable with the Dierks amendment,