

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

March 8, 2001 LB 585

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 585 is a bill by Senator Engel. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 12, referred to the Transportation Committee, advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM0462, Legislative Journal page 712.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Engel, you're recognized to open on LB 585.

SENATOR ENGEL: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. LB 585 was heard on February 6 in front of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee and was unanimously advanced with an amendment that you'll be hearing from soon. To give you a little history on this, two years ago Jack Mills, the executive...former executive director of NACO, came to me with this bill which is well-intended but I felt at the time poorly written. At the time, I told him that I agreed with the concept of the bill but I did not want to rewrite the bill on the floor, and if I could get all the parties together, the wireless providers, the counties, municipalities and all the interested parties to iron out their differences, that I would carry the bill for them. And we've had several meetings over the last two years and we have come up with the bill that I'm going to present to you today, that is agreeable to all the parties and, like I say, it was unanimously advanced by the committee with an agreed amendment. To give you a little idea of what the bill is about, LB 585 establishes a monthly surcharge of 50 cents on wireless phone service to pay for enhanced wireless 911 service. Right now in most of Nebraska, once someone dials 911 on a land line telephone in his home, the 911 operator receives the phone number and addresses the person calling. This is known as enhanced 911. When a cell phone call comes in, the 911 carrier does not get any of this information. The information is important for emergency personnel to be able to call back to gather or provide information as well as providing a precise location when callers are unfamiliar with their whereabouts. The information is very valuable in case the connection is lost or the caller isn't able to speak clearly or when the caller is a child or someone who is incapacitated. None of the 911 centers in Nebraska have enhanced 911 for wireless phones. And