

April 9, 1979

LB 589

SENATOR LEWIS: Mr. President, I think it is important that we know where these amendments come from and who is trying to do it so I would ask Senator Newell one question myself. Senator Newell, is this amendment offered on behalf of Mayor Al Veys of Omaha?

SENATOR NEWELL: No, it is not. He suggested we do away with the entire Commission as opposed to doing away with one position.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Newell, do you wish to close on your amendment?

SENATOR NEWELL: Yes, I would, Mr. President. Basically I would say this that these are policy decisions and some judgments about how large commissions ought to be in this state. Now I sat through some hearings as Chairman of Miscellaneous Subjects Committee on Senator Haberman's bill which proposed that we combine commissions, and while I did not agree with the intent of Senator Haberman's bill, I did think he had some valid points and those valid points being as that various commissions, various other activities and so forth are growing at a continual rate. They grow. They ask for more and more of the state's general fund dollars. Those are general fund dollars that could be better spent other places. I would propose that we have done very little in this budget and I am going to propose further, as time goes on, other cuts. I thought that I would be offering those things that I thought the people most identified with me first. I have some other places that I would like to cut, things that I do not think are high priorities today, things that I think can take second place to maybe some real property tax relief, and for that reason I am offering this amendment. I would reiterate again that we were talking about the use of federal dollars. You know it is easy to accept federal dollars and I have no problem with accepting federal dollars. The difference is that we have to make judgment decisions on whether we want to continue the programs that those federal dollars were originally offered for. When the federal government offers you something for a one year, two year program and then pulls it back, then we have to make again a policy decision on whether or not what they offered us the money for is really worthwhile. I am saying in this situation that we have, if you accept my amendment, there will be a nine percent increase in the general fund appropriation for the Commission on the Status of Women. If you do not accept my amendment, there will be a twenty some percent increase in the Commission on the Status of Women from the general funds and I think that is wrong. I