

with the State of Nebraska's budget, and we hash over five thousand dollar items on up. The Appropriations Committee spends numerous hours dealing with the budget of the State of Nebraska, but here we are dealing with one small bill, one small item, that we are discussing and hardly anybody is listening, far more dollars than the State of Nebraska operates on, and who cares. Who really cares? As long as the ratepayer does not grab us by the shirt collar and tell us that these rates are extremely high and that we have got to do something about it, nobody does anything. I submit to you that if we are going to have the Power Review Board, we better make some changes in them, we better put some teeth in the statutes so that at least these dollars that are expended are going to be looked over by somebody. Sure we have got elected officials out there that are supposed to be looking at it. All the power districts and municipals have elected officials, but they are not really capable of examining the issues from a third party point of view as the Power Review Board would be able to. I think that is what we need. I hate to say that the elected officials out there of the power districts are influenced by their management but I think we all know that they are. Now I am not saying the management is always wrong, but sometimes management is a little jealous of their own little entity in their area. I would certainly urge this body to adopt Senator Beutler's proposed amendments to LB 863.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Kelly.

SENATOR KELLY: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, the Power Review Board is that point in our public power system that is the coordinator to see that we have the power generation facilities and the transportation that we need. You have heard me state this story before and I am restating it again to show a breakdown that happens in the planning of the multi, multi, multimillion dollar public power industry in Nebraska that currently is setting with a bonded indebtedness of some place in the neighborhood of two and one-half billion dollars. Grand Island and Hastings wanted to build a power plant together. When Grand Island and Hastings get together on something you can bet it is pretty good. Application....the Power Review Board says no, NPPD can do a better job than you can do together, buy your power from them. The application was turned down and the joint venture was disbanded. Grand Island went to NPPD and Hastings did also to get their allocation of power. In the meantime, the Omaha Public Power District Board of Directors cancelled out their contract...cancelled out their