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LB 780

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for Senator Marsh if she would yield.

SENATOR MARSH: Thank you, Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Senator Marsh, is there any law now which deals with the Commissions on the Status of Women?

SENATOR MARSH: Senator Pirsch, as it is now, the counties are forbidden to do anything unless the express purpose is in our current statutes and there is nothing in our current statutes which speaks to the ability of counties to participate in this type of activity as the letter from the Attorney General stated. Lancaster County had previously been involved and wished to do so. Then the Attorney General said, sorry, you don't have that express authority to do so, therefore, you must stop until such time as the Legislature will allow counties the option of choosing for themselves. In no way does this mandate. It simply is permissive legislation for a local county to make that decision.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you. Could you tell me also now how the cities, I know that they have had Commissions on the Status of Women and we have a Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women?

SENATOR MARSH: We have state legislation which allows that and apparently home rule cities have the authority to do that. Not all cities, is my understanding, have that authority right now.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Then the state has to have that express, they do have expressed law that does permit the Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women?

SENATOR MARSH: Yes.

SENATOR PIRSCH: And the counties, of course, do not have any (interruption).

SENATOR MARSH: There was nothing relating to counties and the Attorney General's Office ruled that since it was not spoken to, therefore, they did not have the authority to do so, and if they wished to do so, they must ask us for specific permission. Again, I emphasize it is only permissive. No one is required to.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Senator Marsh.