

May 8, 1981

LB 404

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Cullan.

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President, I am not sure that this amendment is technically correct but I would assure that the bill drafter and Enrollment and Review can clean up the technical part of it if that is appropriate. The purpose of this amendment is to make the effective date of the transition from the Commission to a department in January of 1983. First of all, let me say that I support Senator Warner's philosophy a hundred percent. I do agree that the Commission on Aging should be responsible directly to the Governor, and I do support that philosophy. The Public Health and Welfare Committee did consider a bill that would have done nothing but make the Director of the Commission on Aging appointed by the Governor and we did reject that bill because the Commission is....the way that the Aging services are delivered in the state is now on a regional basis and we want to I guess at this point in time, at least pending a study of the Public Health and Welfare Committee, continue to deliver those services in that fashion. There have been, and Senator Nichol and Senator Clark and others can tell you that there have been tremendous problems with the delivery of Aging services throughout the State of Nebraska in recent times, and so we are trying through LB 404 to tighten up the relationship between the Commission, the state and between those areas. And there are many restrictions upon the way those areas operate in LB 404 and I think we are very much clarifying the state's authority in this regard. Back to the amendment, to the Warner amendment, however, the reason that I am proposing that this transition occur in January of 1983 is that that is when there, of course, is a potential change of administration. The gubernatorial elections are coming up. I am, of course, confident that the Thone administration will be reinstated, but I think it is more appropriate to make that change at the beginning of a four-year term for the Governor rather than now. The additional reason that we did not make that change with the Department of Health is that the Governor indicated he wanted to retain the current administration with the Department of Health. But we could get in a position where we would have two Directors in a very short period of time and that would not be good for the delivery of Aging services. And so I think this amendment is appropriate for that reason. This amendment is similar to one that Senator Vard Johnson put on LB 522. I think the philosophy is a good one, and I think it will make for a much smoother transition from the current system to the proposed system. And so for that reason I would ask you to adopt this amendment. I think Senator Warner's basic amendment is a good one, and I support