

ought to pass the bill.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Well, thank you, Senator Schmit. My only...I just have a slight feeling, in the back of my mind, that today there may not be any need for it, but who knows what a year from today will bring. If, as Senator Schmit says, he doesn't see any of the power districts ever doing anything that would be against the antitrust laws, I really don't see the reason for publishing and having this bill that we just suddenly decide to exempt them from the federal antitrust laws. I just don't see the reasoning behind the bill. If they are not doing it now, if there are no public power districts in Nebraska today, there are no privately owned ones, who is to say that a year from now there won't be? I'm just kind of looking ahead and looking at this thing and wondering if it ain't broke why fix it? If we've never had a problem before why are we suddenly coming in and saying all of these power districts want to be exempted from federal antitrust laws? That is my only problem. I don't understand it. I see the Nebraska Municipal Power Associations were for it, the Nebraska Power Association is for it, and as usual I'm sure the public wasn't even aware of it so there were no opponents. But it just leaves me a little doubtful about why we are doing it. I'll let Senator Schmit elaborate on that when he closes. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: You may close, Senator.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I apologize to Senator Higgins. I did not explain the bill well. At the present time the two major power districts are already exempt. This bill adds to that exemption those members of the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool. It provides equity in the area of public power. I believe that it provides the basis under which we are going to operate those facilities. It just gives the Municipal Power Pool entities the same provisions that we already have for the two major ones. I would hope you would pass the bill. If you have any further questions, I'd be glad to try to answer them.