

important issue, Mr. Speaker. I supposed it can get colored with a concept of this being somehow an exception to basic bribery statutes and that in and of itself is a pretty emotional word. We have a section in the law right now which the Nebraska Legislature put in the law in 1976 in its wisdom, in its wisdom, which says, an individual who in the discharge of his or her official duties will be required to take any action or make any decision that may cause financial benefit or detriment to himself or his family or to his business, shall take the following actions. Number one, prepare a written statement describing the matter and the nature of the potential conflict, and if that person is a member of the Legislature, only the Legislature, not the city council or anybody else, but if that person is a member of the Legislature, will make a decision as to whether or not he or she will vote on the issue notwithstanding the conflict. Okay, he will make the decision. So what we get to do, and rightfully so, and rightfully so because we are just citizens who have our own business enterprises, who have our own way of life, if we find some measure coming along which has a direct effect upon us or our family financially, we file a statement indicating a potential conflict and then in addition have the liberty to vote. We have the liberty to vote on it and that is the way it should be in all candor. We should not have our hands tied. We should not be unable to represent a constituency or the state at large on an issue simply because we might have some financial gain or harm because of that issue. Otherwise, the whole notion of a citizen Legislature, in my view, goes out the window. Well, what happened is that notwithstanding our own decision in 1976 to permit the Legislature and legislators freedom to vote notwithstanding conflict of interest, the question was raised a year ago as to whether or not a given member could vote under the other statute, the one that I am now attempting to amend because that is the bribery statute, as Senator Hoagland calls it. Actually, it is not a bribery statute. It is the same kind of statute this one is. So I simply said, well, wait a minute, we ought to have a uniform policy inasmuch as the policy that we had had was that we could vote even if a conflict of interest was there provided we declared the conflict of interest and indicated why we were voting notwithstanding the conflict of interest, then certainly we ought to be excepted from the strictures of the other statute. That is all I said. And that is what Section 12 does. Now, Section 12 was attached to Senator Landis's