

Governor's office. I don't suppose that had anything to do with the change in the equipment. But I do appreciate it. It does show some response on the part of the company, rather quickly I would suggest. I'm just going to say again, ask you to read the bill, ask you to read what you have. I will guarantee you one thing, members of the industry are going to read it. They are not going to like it, but they are going to accept it because they know, they know that they can take all of the garbage that was piled on the bill and they can accommodate it in the price. There are going to be people, there are people here who have spoken time and again about responsibility, accountability, the consumer, the constituency, ladies and gentlemen, I do so with a tinge of sadness.

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: I suggest that we have not acted in the best interests of the people of the State of Nebraska today. We have bowed to power. We have bowed to organization. We have bowed to those individuals who are most capable of influence in this state, and I commend them for it, but I do not agree to it. Ladies and gentlemen, I oppose the advancement of the bill.

PRESIDENT: Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President, colleagues, I'd like to comment quickly on the amendment. As you might expect, I am opposed to the amendment. I would like to go from a little bit different perspective in my opposition this time, though. And that is from the perspective of businesses throughout the State of Nebraska. There has been a lot of discussion about the businesses in the State of Nebraska that are involved in telecommunications. But I don't think there has been too much discussion about the other businesses in this state, the local grocer on the corner, the gas station attendant, the local small businessman that is striving to keep his head above water in these tough economic times. I've been asked to read portions of a letter that I received from the Nebraska...or from the National Federation of Independent Businesses to shed some light on how they feel about this bill. The National Federation of Independent Businesses wishes to express major concern over the provisions of LB 835. On behalf of the 7,000 small and independent business members across the state, I urge you to look before you leap into deregulation of the telephone industry. Passage of LB 835 could subject small businesses to dramatic increases in their local telephone rates and