

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office

Transportation and Telecommunications Committee
May 27, 2009

[CONFIRMATION]

The Committee on Transportation and Telecommunications met at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 27, 2009, in Room 1113 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on gubernatorial appointments. Senators present: Deb Fischer, Chairperson; Kathy Campbell; Tim Gay; Galen Hadley; and Charlie Janssen. Senators absent: Arnie Stuthman, Vice Chairperson; Scott Lautenbaugh; and LeRoy Louden. []

SENATOR FISCHER: (Recorder malfunction)...Telecommunications Committee. We're meeting today for two confirmation hearings and I thank you, gentlemen, for coming. At this time, I would like to introduce the committee members to you that are present. On my far right is Senator Charlie Janssen from Fremont; next we have Senator Kathy Campbell from Lincoln; next we have Senator Tim Gay from Papillion; on my immediate right is our committee counsel, Mr. Dustin Vaughan; on my immediate left is our committee clerk, Ms. Laurie Vollertsen; and on my far left is Senator Galen Hadley and he is from Kearney, Nebraska. I'm Deb Fischer. I'm Chair of the committee and I'm from the 43rd District. My home is Valentine, Nebraska. With that, I would like to open the confirmation hearings that we have for the Motor Vehicle Industry Licensing Board and our first gentleman here today is Roy Neneman. [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Neneman. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Neneman, Roy Neneman, would you like to come forward, please. [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Sure. Would you like this? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Yes, if could give that to Ms. Vollertsen, that would be great. And welcome. We do appreciate you coming down for the hearings. You were just here a little over a year ago... [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Right. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: ...and we appreciate you coming back. We do have a new committee members. In fact, the four that are here today besides me are all new members on our committee. So if you would like to give us just a little bit of your background, Mr. Neneman, that would be great. [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: (Exhibit 1) I was born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska, and I started in the car business in November of 1973 selling cars, and went to work for Jim Earp in 1979 and been associated with Jim for the last 30 years. He made me a partner and I had a dealership in Bellevue called Roy's Bellevue Nissan, and then we sold that in '98

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and we bought this store in 2001 from the Parrella family out in Grand Island and we've been operating that ever since. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Good. Have you...this is a reappointment. Have you enjoyed filling out Toby Miller's term that you were appointed to? [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Yeah, it was very interesting. I mean the very first meeting I went to, an Omaha dealer was fined a considerable amount of money. And then we've had the adventure of the guys out in Scottsbluff, with that incident, where he ran off with all the cars. And there's been some interesting things going on in the car industry as a whole and I think it's going to get more dicey as we go forward with the bankruptcies and stuff and how the dealers will be protected by the state and by the government. I don't...I mean in bankruptcy right now, there's a whole different ball game, but there are a lot of guys that I know that are pretty nervous about what's going to happen to their investments and even like my store. I'm what's classified as a medium-sized store but I have 37 employees besides myself and that can be devastating to a small community if you lose the dealer in the town. Because typically, at least in our town anyway, Tom Dinsdale is a very good dealer and a good friend and he and his family pretty much support just about everything that we got going on in Grand Island. So...but there's a lot of good dealers that support a lot of different projects and I kind of want to be an advocate for their interests, plus, you know, referee with the customers. Because a lot of times people buy cars, they don't quite understand what happened, and that's why Bill and his staff do a nice job of investigating those things and keeping everybody happy. Typically, if it gets past our committee, then they've already had lawyers, guns, money all over the place, you know, so we...I enjoy it. It's a little bit time-consuming but it's something I think that needs to exist to keep everything from going to the court all the time. We referee some of the issues and hopefully we get most of them right. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Okay. Thank you. Are there questions from committee members? Senator Gay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR GAY: I've got one. Thank you. So I guess, I'm new to this committee, you know. Is this just between the industry or can the consumer come with complaints or... [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Yeah. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR GAY: ...what's...how do you spend most of your time when you have a meeting? What do you... [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Well, typically,... [CONFIRMATION]

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SENATOR GAY: I mean those are huge, big issues, it sounds like, but is there other things that happen, too, that maybe... [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Well, typically, if a customer buys a car and they feel like they've been mistreated or something wasn't quite right, they can file a complaint with the Motor Vehicle Licensing Board and Bill will send out an investigator to, you know, for the complaint and then he tries to be a liaison between the seller and the buyer and come to a resolution that keeps both of them happy. Because not all the time the customer is right and not all the time the dealer is right. But instead of having complaints go to the legal system, we can take some of that workload off. And, of course, if they don't agree with what we say then they have the opportunity--I believe I'm right with that, Bill--they can file in district court. [CONFIRMATION]

WILLIAM JACKSON: After a hearing. [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: After a hearing. And then we have representatives from the motorcycle industry, representatives from the mobile home industry, we have public representatives and I think I've got everybody there that's represented, pretty much. But anything that comes up to do with cars and trucks, if there's a problem, they eventually find us and we try to resolve it for the best of everybody. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR GAY: How often does it meet? [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: We meet, what, at least every other month, isn't it? [CONFIRMATION]

WILLIAM JACKSON: It's scheduled every month. It depends on the... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: I have to tell you, this is being recorded so we can transcribe it and so Bill can't talk. [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Yeah, don't ask Bill, okay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Yeah, don't ask Bill. (Laugh) [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Okay. I'll just wing it. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR GAY: (Inaudible). [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Yeah, we have meetings scheduled but we don't always meet. It just depends what's on the agenda... [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR GAY: Yeah. [CONFIRMATION]

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ROY NENEMAN: ...that we need to have a hearing so. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Other questions? I see none. Thank you very much for coming today. [CONFIRMATION]

ROY NENEMAN: Thank you. Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: At this time I would ask, is there anyone here to speak in support of this appointment? Anyone in opposition? Anyone in the neutral capacity? Seeing none, I will close the hearing for Roy Neneman and open the hearing for Paul Gerber. Welcome, Mr. Gerber. Again, I appreciate you coming down for the hearing today. It's important for the committee to have a chance to get to see who you are and have the opportunity to ask some questions, and I would ask you at this time if you would just tell us a little bit about yourself. [CONFIRMATION]

PAUL GERBER: (Exhibit 2) Thank you very much. My name is Paul Gerber. I am from Omaha. I was born there. My father started in the car business in the middle forties so, therefore, I grew up in the car business. I, basically my whole life, have been around cars. Basically started about 15 or 16 years old actually learning about them, the proper procedures, how to buy them, how to sell them. And after my father passed away in 1986, I worked for the family business until 1989 and then I left and went on my own and I have my own company now and we are a buy here, pay here lot. My father was the very first one to do that in the state of Nebraska with his partner, Harry Wilson (phonetic), and I learned a lot from him. And I also employ about 23 or 24 people, so we have a pretty large facility and that's what I do. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Since this is a new appointment, I don't want to put you on the spot, but what do you see as maybe your main duties if you would be appointed to this board? [CONFIRMATION]

PAUL GERBER: Well, obviously, the first thing would be to come and attend the meetings and listen to, you know, the issues as to what's going on and to decide, you know, what is proper for that issue and help to negotiate a proper and fair settlement. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: You mentioned...you used a term I wasn't familiar with, the lot that you have, what did you call it? [CONFIRMATION]

PAUL GERBER: Buy here, pay here, which means we do in-house financing. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Oh, okay. Thank you. Other questions? Senator Janssen.

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[CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR JANSSEN: Chairwoman Fischer. This is...is this...I remember the TV ad, Sonny Gerber Auto, buy here, pay here. Is that...? [CONFIRMATION]

PAUL GERBER: That was my dad. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR JANSSEN: Okay. I just remember those. So I didn't call your references but what would Blake Dillon say about you? And I represent Fremont, by the way. [CONFIRMATION]

PAUL GERBER: As a matter of fact, he would tell you that I'm a pretty forward, straight guy. In fact, I spoke with him yesterday. I'm at his dealership at least once a week. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR JANSSEN: So, perfect. That's good enough for me. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Any other questions? I see none. Again, I appreciate you coming down today. Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

PAUL GERBER: Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Are there any proponents for this appointee who would like to step forward? Anyone in opposition? Anyone in a neutral capacity? Seeing none, thank you, gentlemen, again. I know you put on a lot of miles to come down here for a few minutes, but we do appreciate it. Thank you very much. And with that, I will close the confirmation hearings for the day. [CONFIRMATION]

WILLIAM JACKSON: Thank you, Senator, committee (inaudible). [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR FISCHER: Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

Chairperson

Committee Clerk