

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature  
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Business and Labor Committee  
April 16, 2013

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[CONFIRMATION]

The Committee on Business and Labor met at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 16, 2013, in Room 2102 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on a gubernatorial appointment. Senators present: Steve Lathrop, Chairperson; Burke Harr, Vice Chairperson; and Amanda McGill. Senators absent: Brad Ashford; Ernie Chambers; Tom Hansen; and Norm Wallman.

SENATOR LATHROP: Good afternoon. My name is Steve Lathrop, I'm Chair of the Business and Labor Committee. The time is 8 minutes after 1:00 and we're here for the purpose of taking up a gubernatorial appointment of Sarah Pillen for the CIR. This hearing was set for 1 o'clock. We have two members present in addition to myself, Senator Harr and Senator McGill. And with that, we will begin the hearing, and welcome to the Business and Labor Committee. If you'd like to start with just a few comments, you're welcome to. And then we'll see if any of the committee members have questions for you. [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Sure. I am obviously here today seeking confirmation for the commission and maybe a little bit of background on myself. I'm originally from Columbus. I attended my undergrad at Nebraska Wesleyan here in Lincoln, was a business major, a bio minor. And then went to Creighton University to obtain my law degree. Practiced just shy of five years here in Lincoln in a private practice. My practice was mainly business transactional. I did employment law, both employer and employee sector. And approximately two years ago or so I returned back home to Columbus and am now a part of my family's agricultural business. I am really interested in this position. I think that I would bring objectivity. I'm neutral and have a desire to do it. So that's just a brief snapshot on me. But if you have any questions, I'd be more than willing to entertain them. [CONFIRMATION]

STEVE LATHROP: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HARR: I'll just ask. So how did you get interested in this? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: To be frank and honest, I received a phone call asking if I would have interest. I think right now with my family's business I am more involved in business operations and I probably removed myself a little bit more from the law that I used to practice, more defined I guess. And I think this would be a good opportunity for me to get back into the opportunity. But that area is probably where my interest is at. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HARR: Okay. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: You were at Rembolt Ludtke from September of '06 to January

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of 2011? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Um-hum. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: So 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010, and part of 2006?  
[CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Yes. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: Okay. Can you tell us what you did there? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Yeah. I was an associate attorney, and my focus was on business transactional work. So I did a lot of contracts, some sales of businesses, purchases of business, buy-sell agreements, entities. And then my employment practice was probably some employee law...some employee sector law and then my employer practice was more guidance on day-to-day operations that businesses have struggles with as things come up. FMLA, had to deal with a variety of more day-to-day operational issues that businesses can struggle with. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: Okay. Did you negotiate any collective bargaining agreements in your practice? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: I did not. We had one client that was unionized, and I helped with that briefly but was not at all intimately involved with that. [CONFIRMATION]

STEVE LATHROP: Was that a public sector union? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: No. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: Okay. Did you ever appear before the CIR representing any government entities? [CONFIRMATIONS]

SARAH PILLEN: I did not. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: Okay. You are now at Pilen Family Farms? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Yes, that's where I'm at. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: Do you work full-time at that? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Yes, I work full-time. [CONFIRMATION]

STEVE LATHROP: And are you practicing law in that respect? Are you like counsel to

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the business or are you performing some management function? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: More management function. If I do a legal capacity, it's more a contract review, etcetera. But if things get more detailed than that, then we hire outside counsel. [CONFIRMATION]

STEVE LATHROP: Any other questions? Senator Harr. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HARR: Thank you. So what...transactional...more M&A type work? Is that what you did? Or... [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Yeah, M&A and some more general than that, you know, buying out other shareholders in small businesses. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HARR: Family held, yeah. Closely held. [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Exactly. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HARR: And how much of your practice was transactional and how much was labor related? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Probably 60 transaction, 40 labor. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HARR: Okay. Well, thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: The 40 percent labor, though, was like FMLA and just sort of garden variety labor issues and not issues relative to collective bargaining? [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Precisely. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: Okay. Senator McGill, do you have any questions? No? Thank you. Senator Harr? [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR HARR: Nope. Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: Okay. I don't see any other questions. [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: Okay. Thank you for your time. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: We appreciate you taking the time to come down. [CONFIRMATION]

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SARAH PILLEN: Yeah. No problem. Thank you for your time. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: And thank you for your interest in serving folks of the state of Nebraska. [CONFIRMATION]

SARAH PILLEN: No problem. Likewise. Thank you. [CONFIRMATION]

SENATOR LATHROP: Okay. Thanks. Well, it does not appear that we can go into Exec Session now. [CONFIRMATION]