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Transcriber's Office

Transportation and Telecommunications Committee
March 04, 2014

[CONFIRMATION]

The Committee on Transportation and Telecommunications met at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4, 2014, in Room 1113 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on gubernatorial appointments. Senators present: Annette Dubas, Chairperson; Jim Smith, Vice Chairperson; Lydia Brasch; Galen Hadley; John Murante; and Dan Watermeier. Senators absent: Charlie Janssen; and Beau McCoy.

SENATOR DUBAS: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee hearing. These are confirmation hearings for this afternoon. It is 12:30 and in the interest of time, I'd like to get started. We'll run a few of the just a little housekeeping duties, and then we'll begin with Mr. Randy Meininger who is on the telephone. So first off, I'll introduce the committee members who are with us. We have Senator Lydia Brasch from Bancroft. And then to my immediate left is Anne Hajek. She is the committee clerk. To my immediate right, Joselyn Luedtke, the committee legal counsel. Then we have Senator Jim Smith from Papillion. He is the Vice Chair of the committee. And then Senator John Murante from Gretna. There are a few other senators who may be joining us. In fact, in comes Senator Dan Watermeier from Syracuse. Welcome, Senator Watermeier. We also have Senator Charlie Janssen from Fremont, Senator Galen Hadley from Kearney, and Senator Beau McCoy who will possibly be joining us a little bit later. We are served by Jonathan Beck as one of our pages for the committee. We appreciate the work that Jonathan does for us. He is originally from Centreville, Virginia, currently resides in Seward and is a senior at UNL majoring in political science with a minor in communications. And we appreciate his help in keeping our committees running smoothly. For those who will be coming forward to introduce themselves, we ask that you fill out a green sheet back there on the table by the door. If you'll fill that information out and then hand it to the page when you come up to the table, we'll appreciate that. Then, when you come to the table or as you're on the phone, if you will state and then spell your name clearly for the record, we'll appreciate that. Anyone who plans on testifying in support or opposition, in the neutral, we'll start out with proponents first, then opponents, and then neutral. If you're here today, you don't want to come forward and testify, but you do want to be on the record, we have a pink sheet back by the door. If you'll fill out that pertinent information, that will go into the record as well. Would ask that you silence your cell phones or any other electronic devices just so that they don't interfere with our recording equipment. And if you have...would like to have any conversations, if you'd take those out into the hallway we'd really appreciate it. So with that, I think we are ready to begin with our first hearing for Mr. Randy Meininger. He is on the telephone with us. So Mr. Meininger, again, if you would just state and spell your name and then just tell us a little bit about yourself and about this position that you will be stepping into. [CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: (Exhibit 1) Okay, my name is Randy Meininger, M-e-i-n-i-n-g-e-r,

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reside at 3401 Avenue H, as in Henry, in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, 69361. Senators, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to present myself in front of you, and I also appreciate you allowing me to do this technologywise through the phone. That saves me about a 450-mile trip. However, having said that, I understand that this position with the Nebraska Information Technology Commission will require travel between Scottsbluff and Lincoln, Nebraska. I understand that, and I'm willing to do that. I was born and raised in Scotts Bluff County. In 1974, Valley Ambulance Services Incorporated was formed. So this is our 40th-year anniversary. I'm a paramedic and the owner of that service. And in 1995, we understood that in the region 4 trauma system, we had problems with communications and with networking between all the volunteer services and the hospitals. I took on the chair position of that to work with the radio system and design a system in western Nebraska so that all the hospitals could communicate. January 1 of 2013, FCC regulations required us to narrowband and change some things within our system. Again, I chaired that project to bring everything into FCC compliance. And as we speak today, we've got all the critical access hospitals capable of being tied into the network in 16 counties. And all of the ambulance services have like equipment that is...meets all the interoperable demands of both the feds, the state, and the local. Being involved in healthcare, worked extensively between the hospital and the different services in the electronic format as far as electronic records. And working with the state of Nebraska for all of the ambulance services to be involved in that. So public safety has been my passion since I've got into the ambulance service. Two thousand six, I ran and was elected as mayor for the city of Scottsbluff. And so I am into my eighth year in that position. And working in that I'm very involved in the community. I'm very involved both with public safety and converting city systems to be more friendly as far as technology and being able to receive stuff through technology, being able to communicate. We all communicate in different means. And of course the challenge is being able to find that format or that venue that everybody receives information appropriately and that the public can chime in and give their information. So I believe my background will definitely help me in this area. Currently, of course the state of Nebraska is working on the wideband technology going into the future. It will be a three-year process of getting information. We've already been involved in that at this point. And so I think that's going to be, you know, a very important thing going into the future. And it's a good thing that the state of Nebraska is being part of that. It's always good being part of the solution rather than have the federal government tell you, this is what you're going to do now. Here's the problem. Now fix it. So I'd like to be on the front side of that. I'm not one of these guys that likes promoting myself in front of others, so this is a little different on the telephone. But I open up to any questions that the senators may have. And again, I appreciate the opportunity in which to speak with you today. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Meininger. And we have been joined by Senator Galen Hadley from Kearney. Welcome, Senator Hadley. Are there questions from the committee? Well, by your resume you have obviously been very, very involved in emergency services to your community and surrounding area. So we appreciate you

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for that and that you're willing to serve in this capacity. I think you bring a great deal of expertise from this particular format. Do you feel that Nebraska is moving forward in an appropriate fashion and quickly enough to get us up to speed with the use of technology for specifically emergency services? [CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: Actually, I think we're a little bit behind. I think right now we're working on interoperable solutions. It may have behooved us years ago to actually pick the band and the frequencies that we wanted to happen across the state. I think we treaded on some thin ice, and I think we're paying the price for that right now. However, I am seeing improvements. And I'm seeing with the new technology that's coming into the 911 centers that interoperability can actually happen within the consoles rather than through--well, I'll call them widgets that the state would buy or locals would buy to make things work. So I actually think we're behind a little bit. I think we could do better in the telehealth, in working in that. But it is moving forward. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: I know I had the opportunity to be out in Scottsbluff. We held a hearing out there last fall. And the telehealth was an issue that was discussed at the hearing. Is that something that you rely on very heavily in your area?
[CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: We rely on it quite a bit. One, for connectivity between, you know, the hospitals, education components. You know, as we're talking about the radio system that got upgraded for region 4, you know, we're talking 16 counties, 40 some odd services. And it's telehealth that brings a continuing education, allows the physician to communicate, and it allows us connectivity with the state of Nebraska with Department of Health and Human Services. If it wasn't for that, we wouldn't be efficient, and we'd be spending money in places that...you know, windshield time isn't always your most productive time. However, there are times where it's nice to be alone and be able just to think. But I think telehealth is going to have to expand a little bit. And of course then that takes you down the road of, with that technology, what are your reimbursement sources for physician consults, mid-levels, and also on the education component?
[CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: You know, since becoming a member of this committee, I've had the opportunity to learn a lot about telecommunications, and I find it quite fascinating. But I also find that the changes move faster than we can keep up with. Is that something that you experience in your line of work? [CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: Absolutely. You know, and at some point I know each one of you have had to make that vote of, this is what's in front of us right now. And you have to make a decision and move forward. And you know, two weeks from now something else, a better widget comes out, and now you're behind again. So we're going to continue both in Nebraska and across the nation to deal with those factors. However, I

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don't think we can...we can't hold back thinking that the new technology is just around the corner. You do have to make decisions, and you do have to make what's in front of you work. You do have to work within your budget to make that work. But in Nebraska, as in everywhere, we've got to be careful with technology. High tech, low touch is not good. You know, we were designed for interactivity with each other and relationships. And so if we lose that, technology is not going to be our friend. So we've got to maintain a balance of high technology and high touch. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Well, thank you very much. Are there any other questions from the committee? Senator Brasch. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Meninger (phonetically), for... [CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: Meininger. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Say it one more time slowly. [CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: Meininger, long I. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Okay. I appreciate your willingness to serve. And you have brought a few questions to my mind when you're talking about electronic information, of interoperability. Are you saying that we have a ways to go yet? Is it between software systems, software, hardware? Can you explain that a little further? [CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: You know, I think probably it's mostly in the software side of things. I know in our region out here we just put in 800 and some odd miles of fiber. So we have 48 strands of fiber that connect all the critical access hospitals, and then it connects into Colorado and up to the South Dakota border. You know, of those 48 strands that are buried, it's a redundant system. And we're using currently two of those strands. Keep in mind that Google uses five strands of fiber for their entire network. So on this end of the state, the hardware, the fiber that's buried, and we probably...I believe there was a bill in front of the Senate to try and figure out how much of dark fiber was throughout Nebraska. So that would be part of your hardware side. But I think the hardware is there. I think it's the software getting one program to talk with the other program and make those exchanges. I believe that's all going to be on the software side, or at least that's where I would focus my thoughts at this point. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Very good. And is the software...are there multiple vendors, or where is the solution being generated from? [CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: There's multiple vendors, and that causes some of the issue.

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However, that's entrepreneurship, and that's part of the private sector and jobs. So you know, that's just something that you're going to have...we're going to have to all deal with. But we do have to, on the medical side, get physicians to be able to talk...their systems talking with the hospital systems. And you know, if you're in a car wreck in Omaha, you should be able to get your records from Scottsbluff per se. And then education has to follow that same line. We may have to work on some of the issues in our fiber network and legislative allowances that allow education and medical to be able to be on some of the same fiber. Sometimes our rules and regulations are too stringent in those areas. So education, which is a huge part of the medical side of things, but sometimes we don't allow those to be on that same fiber. I think that's going to have to be addressed at some point. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Very good. I have no other questions. Thank you for your willingness to be appointed. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Any other questions? Seeing none, thank you again, Mr. Meininger, for your willingness to serve in this capacity. As I said, I think you'll bring a great deal of expertise to this position. And we appreciate your willingness to serve in that capacity. [CONFIRMATIONS]

RANDY MEININGER: Okay. And thank you for the opportunity to present in front of you. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: You're very welcome. Do we have anyone who would like to testify in support of this confirmation hearing for Mr. Meininger? Anyone in opposition? Anyone in the neutral? That will close the confirmation hearing for Mr. Randy Meininger. And we will move on to Mr. Dan Shundoff. Is he on the phone yet? Hello, Mr. Shundoff. [CONFIRMATIONS]

DAN SHUNDOFF: (Exhibit 2) This is Dan Shundoff, yes. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Welcome, and thank you for joining us today by telephone. We appreciate you taking the time out of your busy schedule to introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about yourself. I know you are a reappointment. So what I would ask you to do is state and then spell your name for the record. And then again, just give us some of your background and your experience serving in this position right now. [CONFIRMATIONS]

DAN SHUNDOFF: Sure. Yes, so thank you, Chairman Dubas, for the opportunity to connect today and the other members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee, for giving me the time in your busy schedules and really for the flexibility to allow me to call in today. My schedule didn't allow for the travel, so this works very nicely. Thank you. Yes, my name is Dan Shundoff; that's D-a-n S-h-u-n-d-o-f-f, and I am

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the president and CEO of Intellicom which is an outsource information technology service provider located in Kearney. And this is a business...Intellicom is a business I started 20 years ago which now employs more than 30 IT professionals and other business professionals, three-fourths of which actually are products of the University of Nebraska system, either UNK or UNL and maybe for some of the older people, Kearney State College. But don't tell them I said that. It serves as the outsource IT department for more than 400 small businesses between Lincoln and Denver. I'm a Nebraska native. I did leave Nebraska after I graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1987. But I did return in 1994 after the birth of my son. And since then, for the course of the last 20 years or so, also been blessed with 3 daughters along the way as well. So that's really been a blessing. And Nebraska has been a great place to sort of raise a family and own a business. And I feel very fortunate to have these opportunities. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on the commission and very much enjoy working with Brenda and her talented team over the course of my last term. And I'm looking forward to serving on another term. Now...and Brenda and her team, they do a fantastic job. I've sort of witnessed some really large projects over the course of my term, very complex projects. You know, and when it comes to schedule and scope and budget and execution on what are really incredibly complex projects, I have been thoroughly impressed with them, their ability to execute at very high levels along the way. So you know, I guess that's a little bit about me and some of the time that I've spent on the commission. And I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have of me.
[CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Shundoff. Are there questions? Senator Hadley. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR HADLEY: Mr. Shundoff, this is Galen Hadley. I noticed that you live at 2611 Country Club Lane in Kearney. [CONFIRMATIONS]

DAN SHUNDOFF: Yes, I do. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR HADLEY: Do you know who lives at 3112 Country Club Lane in Kearney?
[CONFIRMATIONS]

DAN SHUNDOFF: That would be the esteemed Galen Hadley, I believe.
[CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR HADLEY: You answered my question fully and completely. Thank you, Mr. Shundoff. (Laughter) [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Oh my gosh. Okay, Senator Brasch. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Thank you, Madam Chairman, and thank you for your willingness

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to be reappointed. And I'm curious, have you seen your role change while serving on the commission? Or do you see it changing moving forward with technology that the path that Nebraska is moving or needs to move? [CONFIRMATIONS]

DAN SHUNDOFF: Yeah, that's a great question, Senator Brasch. I think that...I don't know that I've seen it change over the course of my term, but I think I can say that, you know, there's something important...or I feel that there's something very important about sort of the public-private interaction that occurs via the NITC. And I think specifically it's about, you know, the approach that Brenda and her team, in my opinion, that they bring to the table is very businesslike. So as what I have seen is a real commitment to value and cost constraint and, you know, really enabling state agencies to do more with less specific around, you know, implementing technology. And I think that the impact that that has on the private sector is that I really like being a part of it that it really leads by example, right? So it doesn't necessarily do you anything directly, you know, for my business as an example. But indirectly, it really sort of sets the stage and says, hey, this is how organizations should run relative to technology, and here are how we make decisions and why we make decisions and what the expected impacts are and being able to measure those and report back and really just lead by example. And I do think that that's an important component to what Brenda's organization does and the leadership of the commission. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Very good. And I would agree with you wholeheartedly that Brenda and members of her staff are excellent leaders in technology. I've personally seen over the last I believe ten years where they started with distance learning and have quickly and rapidly learned to surf the net. And they've received several national recognition awards. And I was formerly with education technology companies where, as I'm across the country I would see they were involved with IS...ISTE and others. And people look to them and Nebraska, so your willingness to be reappointed and your great comments about the group are well received and right on line. Thank you. [CONFIRMATIONS]

DAN SHUNDOFF: And certainly. And I would just add, too, the collaborative approach that sort of crosses agencies and departments to really drive innovation and value and return for the taxpayers and the state is really...it does lead nationally. It really is inspiring. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Absolutely. Thank you. I have no other questions. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Other questions? Seeing none, again, we thank you for joining us today. We're glad we could accommodate you by phone. The Telecommunications Committee should probably use the telecommunications that we have available to us. And so we're happy that you could join us in this capacity. [CONFIRMATIONS]

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DAN SHUNDOFF: Certainly. Thank you very much. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: We will move on to proponents. Is there anyone who would like to speak in support of Mr. Shundoff? Anyone in opposition? Anyone in the neutral? Seeing none, that will close the hearing for Mr. Dan Shundoff. And we will move on to our next one, Mr. Dorest Harvey. [CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: (Exhibit 3) First of all, thank you very much for the opportunity to come visit with you fine folks today. And I look forward to working on the NITC. My name is Dorest Harvey, D-o-r-e-s-t H-a-r-v-e-y. Not a native Nebraskan, born in Ohio, raised in western Pennsylvania, came to Nebraska with the Air Force in 1968 and have been here pretty much on and off ever since, married a lovely young lady from south Omaha that kept me here. I spent 14 of my 20 years active duty in the Air Force out at Offutt doing everything from computer programming, analysis, database administration, management in personnel, nuclear war planning, and strategic intelligence initiatives essentially. I was a bootstrapper at the University of Nebraska-Omaha class of '71, same as Chuck Hagel. I didn't know Chuck at the time, but...went on to become a distinguished military grad of Air Force OTS and came back after five years in Kansas City working for the Air Force Communications Service working on the Worldwide Military Command and Control System, doing major...MAJCOM conversions of software to new hardware platforms. Was asked to come back to Omaha to work on the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff where I introduced database technology...helped introduce database technology to our nation's war plan. We introduced cruise missiles to the war plan, etcetera. In 1982, I was selected for an Air Force Institute of Technology position called Education with Industry, where I worked for 10 months with the senior systems integration staff at Westinghouse Electric back at their productivity and quality center in Pittsburgh, working across their 33 business units to introduce new technologies for business innovation to improve business processes. I came back...was asked to come back to Omaha, and I was the chief of office of information management and audit for SAC, the Strategic Air Command back in the early '80s. When we combined the computer and communication assets and core of the Air Force, I was asked to be director of policy for that organization. I declined that, but I went to work in the intelligence arena and retired out of the program called IDHS-80 as the executive software for the database and systems in one of our major intelligence data handling systems. I have...had 2 sons born in Kansas City, the older son was ready to start high school that year, so I retired from the Air Force with my 20 years as a major about to become a lieutenant colonel. They said, have we got a deal for you. You're going to be on the Scope Leader list. The next 6 to 8 years, every 12 to 18 months, you and your family are going to get to go to some new and exciting place. My older son wasn't interested. So we had a family discussion and opted to stay in Nebraska. I worked for...went to work for First Data Corporation, worked my way up as a vice president there, managed research and development activities for them. When I joined, they were

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fully owned by American Express. And when Jim Robinson ran American Express, he used to provide us \$10 million a year for essentially business innovation, using technology to improve business outcomes and processes. And I worked within First Data Corporation with our business units across the country to make those investments. When we issued our IPO at First Data, we were no longer participating in that. I helped form First Data Technologies where we used the EDS model for the technology vertical...or horizontal, if you would, with the business unit verticals. And opted again to stay in Omaha as we moved First Data Technologies out to Denver. I then was vice president of development strategies and was fortunate enough after having helped put AIM Institute together in Omaha, to work with the folks at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, met with the chancellor and determined that when we were going to build what now became the Peter Kiewit Institute, the IS&T College, Del Weber was going to build that on the parking lot of the engineering college there at UNO. And I said, Del, if you had some land, where would you like to have that? One thing led to another. I put the business plan together to take the northern third of the old Ak-Sar-Ben racetrack and moved forward with that business plan and, I think, was reasonably successful in that. When I left First Data, I went to work for GDE Systems which is a major defense contractor. Helped put together a major defense contract with STRATCOM. Went from there, was asked by the CIO of First National to come down and join them. Worked with First National up through 2001 when I was asked to join the staff at the Peter Kiewit Institute in the College of IS&T. And I was a senior community service associate and executive in residence there and did that for ten years. Was asked to do some consulting for Union Pacific Railroad, Mutual of Omaha, and other big companies. In addition to that, USSTRATCOM, myself, and a colleague from the university, Dr. John de Groot were asked to come out and help STRATCOM through their nuclear war planning transformation process. And through time, that's now evolved into a full-time consulting position, and I've parted with it. Although I'm still an unofficial ambassador to the Peter Kiewit Institute, I'm now full time with a small company out of Papillion, Strategic Professional Resources, and provide consulting services to USSTRATCOM for global sensor integration on networks and in mission planning and analysis systems at STRAT. I've been involved with the initial information resources cabinet since...gosh, her name escapes me right now...was Lieutenant Governor under Ben Nelson. Kim Robak asked me to come down and help myself and Joyce Wrenn who was CIO at Union Pacific at the time to come down and help with the Information Resources Cabinet which morphed into the State Government Council. And I've worked with Brenda and her staff on the State Government Council for the last 15 years. So I look forward to working on the NITC. And I think I've rattled on long enough. Any questions you have of me, be glad to answer them. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Very good. Thank you, Mr. Harvey. Are there questions? Senator Brasch. [CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: Yes, ma'am. [CONFIRMATIONS]

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SENATOR BRASCH: Thank you, Madam Chairman. And Mr. Harvey, thank you for your willingness to be appointed here and to serve and also for serving our country. Your credentials here are amazing, all from research and development to looking like you...reading you developed...did you invent the Internet? (Laugh) [CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: No, ma'am. I know the fellow who's...no, I...(laugh)
[CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Well, I'm sure you've been with it long enough.
[CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: I think Walter did that. No. [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: He had a major role in it. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Major role, okay, because I know the military did initially launch I believe the first e-mail and use... [CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: I can tell you, out here down in H-wing in the first floor at USSTRATCOM, they used to have one of those little terminals and...
[CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Sure. [CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: ...back then, when we were in the mainframe business, we thought that was kind of silly. But I also remember when we put in some of the initial systems and how everything was changing. And that was part of my role at American Express. We saw that coming and tried to take advantage of that change. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Well, and I see you have boots-on-the-ground experience over the years, and looking into the future is part of research and development. Looking into the future of Nebraska and the NITC, is there something that you believe is on the horizon, that we're almost there but not quite yet? [CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: Well, I think there's a lot of things we're on the horizon of, and it's more just the...the more the collaboration, and I think Walter is probably going to talk about some stuff he's been more personally involved with in the telecommunications area. There's some real benefits to be had there. We just need to work together to solve the problems. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Very good. Well, thank you for your service to the country and willingness to serve on this commission. I have no other questions. [CONFIRMATIONS]

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DOREST HARVEY: You bet. Thank you. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Are there any other questions? Well, I, too, would like to thank you for your service to the country and everything that you've done since then. I mean, reading through your resume and biography. It's a lot of alphabet soup, but it sounds very, very impressive. And I think what you bring to the commission will serve the state of Nebraska very well. So I... [CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: Well, like I say, I've enjoyed working with Brenda and her staff through the years and look forward to continuing that. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Well, we thank you for bringing your expertise to the state for us, to share with us. Thank you. [CONFIRMATIONS]

DOREST HARVEY: You're welcome. The reason I'm still here, if you look at marketwatch.com, I'm the guy that says, I'm here because of good, open, honest people in Nebraska. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Well, thank you very much. We're glad you made this your home. Is there anyone who like to testify in support of Mr. Harvey? Anyone in opposition? Anyone in the neutral? That will close our hearing on Mr. Dorest Harvey. And we will go to the next one, Mr. Walter Weir. [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: (Exhibit 4) Thank you, Senator Dubas, members of the committee. [CONFIRMATIONS]

ELECTRONIC DEVICE: Sorry, I missed that. [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: I know. (Laughter) [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR HADLEY: I thought that was mine. [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: Well, thank you for having me here today. My name is Walter Weir, W-a-l-t-e-r W-e-i-r. I live at 6900 Beaver Creek Lane here in Lincoln, and I am currently serving as the chief information officer for the University of Nebraska. Like Dorest, I'm also a retired Army lieutenant colonel, a Vietnam veteran. I served as 1 of just 20 officers dedicated solely to computing and data processing throughout the Army. I assisted in the initial design and implementation of the Army's first logistics system. I was also selected by the State Department to be the primary advisor to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia where I advised them in all areas of automation, from hardware, software, implementation, networking, and finally, computer design. And finally, I served for six years as an associate professor of computer science at Westpoint Military Academy.

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Upon retiring from the Army, I was hired by Fordham University in the Bronx. They really made good pizza. And in that position I was responsible for all academic research and administrative computing. In 1995, I was hired to be the first CIO at the University of Nebraska, and I report directly to J.B. Milliken. My wife and I moved here, and we've enjoyed it ever since. And we're great believers in the good life, especially from moving from New Jersey. And I've had some conversations with J.B. He's moving back to New York, so I don't know. In 1999 at the university, we selected and implemented on time and on budget a complete financial system known as SAP, a very large ERP project. We now support all four campuses of the university as well as the three state colleges on one system. We also, in 2010, successfully acquired, implemented, and brought to life the Oracle PeopleSoft system for the student information component. This is admissions, registration, financial aid, bursar. And we also support seven campuses, the four university campuses and the three state colleges. And it's been a wonderful partnership, by the way. In working with this wonderful person behind me, Brenda Decker and the NITC, I think we've been able to do some pretty significant things. I've chaired the technical panel of the NITC since its inception. And just to give you an example, one of the things I think we're most proud of is what we've done with Network Nebraska. If we were to purchase the same amount of bandwidth today that we did in 2004, it would cost the state \$5 million a month or \$60 million a year. Through the efforts of the NITC and the Legislature helping us, we've been able to reduce that cost to \$45,000 a month or \$540,000 a year. We anticipate this summer we're going to see an even further reduction in that cost where we'll be looking about \$324,000 a year. That's a rather significant savings brought together by people working together, collaborating together, and talking with each other about common needs and requirements. I strongly believe, as I mentioned, in collaboration and cooperation where it makes sense to do so. I also believe that information technology has become one of our most critical assets both in higher education as well as in state government and especially in the health services area. Today, technology permeates, one way or another, just about every aspect of our lives from the first contact a student or a citizen has with one of our state or education Web sites, through the myriad of back-end systems and networks that manage and provide access to the information they seek. I have an undergraduate degree in economics, a master's in business administration, a master's in computer science, and a master's in military arts and science which I haven't figured out how to make use of other than I can attack a hill from many directions. I look very much to working forward with the NITC and yourselves in moving the state forward in this important area. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Thank you so much, Mr. Weir. Are there questions? Senator Brasch. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Thank you, Madam Chairman. And I, too, want to thank you for your military service to our country... [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: Thank you. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: ...and to the university here and also your willingness to serve on the commission. And I'm just looking through your resume, and I see that, dating back to like 1986 where you started working with technology and I believe, if my memory serves me right, at that time we're rapidly moving off of mainframes into desktop computing. Is that correct? [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: That's correct. It's also, the pendulum is swinging back the other way now. There was a situation in the '80s where we started to take advantage of rather what I would call...what they used to call WYSIWYG, what you see is what you get. And we found that on the terminals that we were using in a lot of the areas, for example in the student systems, it was a green tube. It was lines just like a typewriter. And we moved into the more advanced, using the mouse, pointing to objects on the screen which is what the WYSIWYG stands for. And the bandwidth that we had between where the computer was and where the people were was not big enough to handle that kind of capacity because every time you hit the return key, you have to repopulate that entire screen of all those pixels and all the stuff that's on there. It's not so much going back--when you enter the data and you hit the return key and it goes back--that's not bad. It's when I ship the data to you. And so I remember when I got here to university, this was 1995, we had what they call a T1 circuit. It was about a 1.4 megabyte channel that went between Lincoln, here, where the data center is to the campuses. And so we started to push the machines out to the campus because the campus networks were running faster than the network that was between the campuses. Today, that's completely opposite. We run at blazingly fast speeds between the university and the campuses. We run at 40-gig circuits. We're going up to 100-gig circuits. We also shoot what they call colors. There's a thing called dense wave division multiplexing where I actually shoot, instead of white light I shoot colors of light so I can shoot multiple things simultaneously. So the network has become the primary foundation for a lot of the networking and a lot of the capabilities that take place. This is why Network Nebraska is so important. What we've been able to do working with Brenda, the state, the university, all our partners throughout the state--we have over, what, 260 schools now connected. I mean, it's unheard of. There's no other state doing this. We're supporting state and local government. We're supporting health. We have over a hundred hospitals and clinics connected to the network. All of the higher education schools are connected, Creighton University, Doane, Midlands (sic) Community College, Southeast Community. They're all connected to this network, all working together through a membership agreement. So the things have changed. And the mainframe now, what you're hearing now, the shared services, so we're bringing a lot of that compute power back, centralizing it either through outsource service or through services we provide, where the user just needs to have an iPad. They need to have a small terminal with a browser, and they can do as much with that as they could anywhere. [CONFIRMATIONS]

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SENATOR BRASCH: Very good. The cloud. [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: Yes. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Is the university...and you think Nebraska...is that something that is...? [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: Part of me says that the cloud is a marketing strategy. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Okay. Curious. [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: Depends how you call a cloud. I could argue that the shop that I run...I have two data centers, one at the medical center and one at Lincoln. And as far as you're concerned, it's in the cloud because you're coming through a network wirelessly to connect to it. My concern with the cloud is security. And this is something I know Brenda and I have wrestled with. As we move into the cloud structure, one, do you have enough bandwidth to support being in the cloud? Two, where is your data stored? How is it protected? There's a lot of people now signing up for free services: Box, Google Drive, all these different technologies. I don't know if they know it. When you do that, you've signed over your rights to that data to those companies. And so we have an obligation at the university and Brenda as well in educating people, the dos and the don'ts about using some of this technology. I'm also very concerned about big fish swallowing little fish. And as we move into this cloud business, you're seeing the bigger fish swallowing the smaller fish. And so your contractual agreement with company A is now longer...null and void. It's been picked up by somebody else. And do you have the appropriate legal contract to get back what has now become somebody else's property? [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR BRASCH: Very good. I have no other questions. I want to thank you again. And the others I'm very excited to see the information everyone has, the experience moving forward. We have great things happening in our state thanks to individuals like everyone here today. Thank you. [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: Thank you. Thank you. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Other questions? Seeing none, I, too, would like to thank you for your willingness to serve and the expertise you'll bring to this position. Thank you very much. [CONFIRMATIONS]

WALTER WEIR: Thank you. Look forward to working with you. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Thank you. Is there anyone who would like to testify in support?

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Opposition? Neutral? If not, that will close the hearing on Mr. Walter Weir. And we will move on to Mr. Gary Warren. Mr. Warren couldn't be with us today, but he has asked me to speak on his behalf. So I will go give a little introduction. And Senator Smith, I'll let you take it from there. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR SMITH: Welcome, Senator Dubas. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: (Exhibit 5) Thank you, Senator Smith. My name is Annette Dubas, A-n-n-e-t-t-e D-u-b-a-s, I represent Legislative District 34. And Mr. Gary Warren is a constituent of mine. And he...when he realized he wouldn't be able to join us today, he did ask if I would speak on his behalf. I know you have his information in your packet of information. But, you know, I said it would be...I'd be more than happy to do this. I have worked with Mr. Warren since becoming a state senator. He has been extremely helpful in helping me understand this area of technology. Like the other hearings before us, it's obvious that we have some people who are willing to step forward with a great deal of expertise to help with the NITC. And Mr. Warren is no exception to that. His experience...I mean, he's been involved with economic development, very involved in his home community of Aurora. He's a graduate of Aurora and came back to work for Hamilton Telecommunications. He has been involved with the Nebraska Diplomats, past chairman of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce, and has played a very active role in the growing of Hamilton Telecommunications. And as I said, what he has taught me has been extremely helpful in my role as Chair of this committee. You know, there's probably not a lot more to say about Mr. Warren other than he does bring a great deal of expertise. I believe his contributions to this commission will be very valuable. And he will be able to help turn that into good things for the state of Nebraska as well as our local areas. So I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about Mr. Warren. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Senator Dubas. Questions from the committee? Seeing none, that ends the confirmation hearing on Gerald Warren. [CONFIRMATIONS]

SENATOR DUBAS: Do we have anyone who wanted to testify in support, opposition, or neutral? Seeing none, that will close all of our hearings for today. We thank you for coming forward today, appreciate you being here and sharing your information with us. So official action will be taken by the Legislature, and I think you will be officially on the board. So thank you again for your expertise. [CONFIRMATIONS]