

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Transportation and Telecommunications Committee May 28, 2019

FRIESEN: Welcome to the Transportation and Telecommunications hearing. And today it's going to be a confirmation hearing for Ann Richart-- I think I'm pronouncing it right.

ANN RICHART: Pretty close.

FRIESEN: Pretty close. And so with that, I don't think I need to tell everybody to quiet their cell phones and stuff, except I should probably do mine.

ALBRECHT: OK.

_____ : Oh, whoops.

FRIESEN: And I'll just let everybody introduce themselves, and we'll start over there.

ALBRECHT: Sure. Hi. I'm Joni Albrecht from northeast Nebraska: Thurston, Wayne, and Dakota Counties.

ANN RICHART: Very good.

DeBOER: I'm Wendy DeBoer. I have parts of Omaha and also the small town of Bennington in Douglas County.

TIP O'NEILL: I'm Tip O'Neill. I'm the legal counsel for the committee.

FRIESEN: Curt Friesen, District 34.

GEIST: Suzanne Geist, District 25, which is here in Lincoln.

BOSTELMAN: And Bruce Bostelman, District 23: Saunders, Butler, and Colfax Counties.

SALLY SCHULTZ: Sally Schultz-- I'm the committee clerk. And our page--

FRIESEN: The page, yes.

NEDHAL AL-KAZAHY: Hi-- Nedhal. Oh, and just a little thing--

FRIESEN: Introduce yourself.

NEDHAL AL-KAZAHY: I'm Nedhal Al-Kazahy. if-- also, when guys need something, you need to raise your hand. I'm short. I can't see over the chairs [LAUGHTER].

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ALBRECHT: Water? Water?

DeBOER: Got it.

BOSTELMAN: We'll get it out of that--

ALBRECHT: I'll have some water.

TIP O'NEILL: Nedhal? She would like some water.

NEDHAL AL-KAZAHY: Water? Thank you.

FRIESEN: So we're, we're in a pretty relaxed hearing mode today, and I'm-- we, we were scheduled to have a regular session today, but they called that off.

ALBRECHT: Recess.

FRIESEN: So with that, I think we'll open the hearing. And why don't you, I guess, tell us a little bit about yourself, or however you want to proceed.

ANN RICHART: OK, I'll do that; thank you very much. Good afternoon, Chair Friesen and members of the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. My name is Ann Richart. I'm happy to be, to have been appointed as the new director of the Aeronautics Division of the Nebraska Department of Transportation.

FRIESEN: Could you spell your name, please?

ANN RICHART: I'm sorry. A-n-n R-i-c-h-a-r-t. I'm sorry; I forgot that part.

FRIESEN: I, I should have reminded you, but we've pretty well thrown all rules away, so-- [LAUGHTER].

ANN RICHART: I made my first mistake; I'm ready to go now. I'm going to start by just giving you a brief background on myself, my education and experience, what got me here, and then some of my goals for the future. And I absolutely would want to hear your input and questions for me. I'm a professional airport manager. That's how I came to this position, though I have done this before. I actually started in the aviation industry in the mid '80s in Alaska. I grew up in Oregon but I went to Alaska for an opportunity to have an adventure, you know, live away from home. And it turns out that aviation is a way of life in

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Alaska. It's more than just a mode of transportation. And so as a young woman with no real marketable job skills, just looking for a job, I got a job kind of as a secretary in a very small little airline in Fairbanks that served all the bush communities. And so in that organization there was pilots and mechanics and me. So like I said, I was a secretary. I answered the phone, I did some of the bookkeeping, I loaded the planes, I fueled the planes, I kept track of where the planes were in flight, I talked to the people in the villages about what they needed-- schedules, things like that. And I loved that. I was a little bit older. I wasn't fresh out of high school and that-- just kind of looking to have that experience, you know, that lets you know this is what I want to spend my life doing. And at that point, I realized this is it; this is what I want to spend my life doing. But unfortunately in the mid-'80s, that was right after deregulation of the airline industry had taken effect, and so small airlines, even larger airlines, were going out of business as they adapted to the new regulatory environment. So the first airline that I worked for went out of business. I loved it so I just walked down the street and got a similar job at a similar organization-- also loved that, kept doing the work. That one went out of business so I walked down the road, got another job at a similar place. But what I noticed was a consistency among all those three little airlines-- was, once a month, the assistant airport manager would just show up and collect the rent check. And that's when I said: That's the job for me; I want to be on the airport side of this. So I left Alaska and went to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. That's kind of well known as the university worldwide for careers in aviation. And my goal at that point was to be an airport manager. And sure enough, since I finished that, then I, I got my first job as the operations manager at the Eugene Airport in Oregon, which was my hometown. The great thing that I got in that position was we did a lot of construction, so I got my feet wet doing pretty major construction projects. We did air shows, so I got to do air shows. And that-- the Eugene airport is, in size, bigger than Lincoln, smaller than Omaha, so if you can kind of picture that size of airport. And so I worked on some of the-- working with airlines to get airline service and make sure that we kept that going. I left Eugene because, as I said, I was like the second in command at the airport and I really wanted to be the boss. So I left that airport and went to Hutchinson, Kansas, which was my first managing-an-airport job. Again, we did some pretty significant construction at Hutchinson while I was there. But the big experience that I gained at "Hutch" was working with the aircraft manufacturers in Wichita. Obviously that is the seat of manufacturing. And Hutchinson being 40 miles away, I, I

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really got to get to know and work with the manufacturing element of the industry, which helped a lot. After that I went back to Oregon and actually worked for the Oregon Department of Transportation. There, at the time, the state owned and operated 36 airports, so I worked for the Department of Transportation as the manager of those 36 airports. While I was there, kind of a funny opposite thing happened to what Nebraska did recently. The Oregon legislature decided to split the Department of Transportation apart and create a separate Department of Aviation. So having been the airport's manager with ODOT, I was appointed by the governor to be the first director of the, the new Department of Aviation, and I kind of carried us through all the, the birthing stages, the creating of a new department. And Director Schneweis and I have talked about this quite a bit, that I think that gave me an interesting perspective on how important it is to be a part of a larger organization because, in my opinion, when I found-- once we broke away and we were a stand-alone agency of 16 people, we spent a lot of time and effort and resources on just doing the regular bureaucracy that it takes to get work done, and we really lost a lot of our effort to support the industry and, and support our airports. I worked very hard to do that because that was the expectation, but I think, to have this opportunity to come in the opposite direction where we have now created a Department of Transportation and we're looking for ways that we can work together to better serve the citizens of Nebraska, I'm excited to be a part of that because I've seen it from both sides. And I've already got some ideas of how we can capture those efficiencies so that we do a better job. But that's not the end. After I left the Oregon Department of Aviation, had an opportunity to manage another airport in Oregon, the Klamath Falls Airport, which is a joint-use field. It is about half and half. We had commercial airline service, but also an Air National Guard base, so that was an experience. I wanted to work with military aviation and really partner with the National Guard. So I had a great opportunity to do that. After that I moved to upstate New York, to Elmira, to manage the Elmira Corning Regional Airport. Had an interesting experience there in that a variety of different things happened so that while I was there the passenger use of the airport doubled. So we had to work really hard to figure out how to keep the infrastructure at pace with the number of people trying to use the airport. And so that was the, kind of the fun challenge with that airport. And from there I went to Martha's Vineyard, which is a little island off the coast of Massachusetts. And we talked about this the other day. Obviously Martha's Vineyard airport is used by the rich and famous but, aside from that, that airport also provides a very, very vital

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link to all of the people that live on the island year round because it's an island. And a lot of people don't think about that-- the, kind of the idea is Martha's Vineyard-- that's where ex-presidents fly and things like that. That's all true but it's also an essential transportation facility for during the time when there's storms or for whatever other reason the ferries can't get to the island. The grocery stores, the hospitals, businesses-- everyone relies on the airport just to keep life on the island functioning. And that's a similarity that I see. And forgive me if it sounds bizarre to, to find a similarity between Martha's Vineyard and rural communities in Nebraska, but the idea of-- some of our communities are so rural they are, almost are like an island. And that's exactly why the airport is so important to provide that access for business and medical emergency services, as well as recreation. So that's my history; that's what got me here. I-- after a few years at Martha's Vineyard I was really looking to get further west. Most of my family is on the West Coast. My mother, unfortunately, is in a nursing home in the Seattle area. So I wanted to get closer to her, and this is closer. It also gives me an opportunity to have, instead of a facility focus, really get back to seeing how I can improve a system, a statewide system. Like I said, I've done that before. I really enjoyed that job. Since I left the Department of Aviation in Oregon and have been working at stand-alone facilities, I've continued to find ways that I can have some input on larger policy issues. For example, I've been very active in industry organizations. Right now I serve on the board of directors of the American Association of Airport Executives, exactly so that I can, as I said, kind of keep my finger in the pie of the policy issues that, that affect airports nationwide. So when this position came available, it just seemed perfect to me. When Director Schneweis and I started talking, right away we understood that we seem to have a similar kind of policy strategy, which is, we need to do everything that we can for our citizens. That's what they expect out of government, and that's what they deserve, and not to be old-fashioned kind of government, you know, bureaucracy, but really look for ways to streamline and, and make things work, and I'm excited to be here to do that. This is the beginning of my third week on the job. Since I've been here I've spent a lot of time talking and mostly listening to people. My staff-- and first of all, I want to make sure that you all know that the aeronautics staff is really, really an excellent group of topnotch professionals. They know what they're doing, they care, and they also have been giving me outstanding support. They're, they're ready to go in whichever direction we decide makes the most sense. It's been many, many years since our office has, has done an aviation system plan.

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Typically the FAA helps us fund those. The last one was done in 2002, so it's about time to do that now, which is perfect timing for me just getting here. I would have been disappointed if one had started and I was in there midstream and had to follow somebody else's strategy, so I'm delighted with that. Right now we are in the process of, of doing a statewide airport economic impact study, which is a typical review that states do all the time. I did one of those when I worked for the state of Oregon. As an airport manager, I've used economic impact studies, and that's what it is mostly, I think, a tool for airports to use so their community can understand what the value of the airport is to the community. We'll finish that probably later this year, early next year, but that economic impact study then will feed right into, then, our system plan, which will tell us, you know, in, in today's day and age with changing technology, changing use of aircraft, what should the best aviation system in Nebraska look like? And what are, what do we need to do? What do we need to change about our current system to get there? And so we're, as I said, next year we'll probably be ready to start on that. That will fold in to, to the Department of Transportation's long-range transportation plan. And so we're, we're ready to go. This hearing is a crucial first part of my opportunity to listen and hear what it is you want me to do at this job. So I guess, with that, I'm ready for your questions.

FRIESEN: All right. Thank you very much. Any questions from the committee? Senator Albrecht.

ALBRECHT: I just have a few. Thank you for being here today, Ann. And can I call you Ann?

ANN RICHART: Please do, thank you.

ALBRECHT: Call me Joni. Anyway, statewide study-- when was the last time that that was done in the state of Nebraska? I mean, have they even had one?

ANN RICHART: Yeah, yes-- 2002 was when it was.

ALBRECHT: That was when it was? OK. Sorry about that. Just trying to write and pay attention at the same time. So where do you house out of? Where, where's your office?

ANN RICHART: My-- well, the aeronautics office hasn't moved, so it's at the Lincoln Airport.

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ALBRECHT: It is at the Lincoln Airport.

ANN RICHART: Um-hum.

ALBRECHT: Is that in the same building where the Nebraska National Guard is? No?

ANN RICHART: No.

ALBRECHT: Different?

ANN RICHART: It's, it's, it's near there.

ALBRECHT: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: It's in the same building where there's an FAA office.

ALBRECHT: OK.

ANN RICHART: And if you're familiar with Duncan Aviation, we're kind of nestled in between two Duncan buildings.

ALBRECHT: OK, very good. And will you-- have you gone to Washington to develop policies in your years of working with--

ANN RICHART: Yes, I have. I've actually worked with FAA on policy development. I've been called by FAA to testify before Congress on a couple of different policy issues.

ALBRECHT: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: And I worked with industry groups-- there's a bunch of them-- but airport groups, state aviation association groups,--

ALBRECHT: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: --and aircraft manufacturers, to work with kind of the leaders of those organizations and members of Congress to develop policy.

ALBRECHT: And this is just a question I have, but do you-- how many airports do we have in the state in Nebraska?

ANN RICHART: There are actually 80 airports.

ALBRECHT: Really.

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ANN RICHART: One-- yeah. Eighty public use airports. One of them is a seaplane base, so there's 79 ground-based, public use airports.

ALBRECHT: So do you also take care of-- like I'm a farmer and we spray our fields sometimes.

ANN RICHART: Um-hum. Um-hum.

ALBRECHT: Does that fall under your program, as well?

ANN RICHART: Well, we don't regulate aerial applicators; FAA does that. But making sure that they have the facilities to use on the ground, like airports--

ALBRECHT: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: --with the correct facilities, that's absolutely our job. Yes.

ALBRECHT: Well, if you ever get up to Wayne, they have very nice airport and I understand that-- that's in my district-- and they, I think they sell the most fuel in the state of Nebraska. Is that right? Have you heard that before?

_____ : I don't know.

ALBRECHT: Well, that's what I've heard. So if you ever get out there, please look me up.

ANN RICHART: Senator, I will be there.

ALBRECHT: OK.

ANN RICHART: And that's an outstanding statistic, so I'm going to look that up as soon as I'm done here. That's good to know; thank you.

ALBRECHT: Thank you for being here.

FRIESEN: Thank you, Senator Albrecht. Senator DeBoer.

DeBOER: Thank you very much. Your extensive background is great; I love it. I do notice that you have not had, maybe, as big of an airport as Omaha is. I think that your focus on the rural is going to be great. I think that your experience, even back into Alaska, to sort of coordinate, that's going to be great. But I'm wondering what kind of plans you have for Eppley, because it's something that we need to

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think about, whether or not we're ready to grow that, and how we would do that. So if you could speak just for a minute about-- as the only Omaha senator here, I think I have to ask the question. So if you could kind of tell me about your plans for Eppley, I'd love to hear that.

ANN RICHART: Absolutely. Mr. Chair, Senator DeBoer, you're absolutely right. I haven't worked at an airport the size of Eppley. And I actually just met with David Roth at Eppley on Friday. And they had-- he also has a very, very good staff that's apt at what they do.

DeBOER: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: And so I'm not sure that, right off the bat, they need any help from the state. They've got good planners. They have a good relationship with the FAA. But the, the kind of promise that I made with Mr. Roth at, at Eppley Field is that, at the point that the state can do something to help Eppley fulfill your requirements, let me know and we're right there. Other than that, what I am going to do is stay out of your way because that's kind of what they're looking for. So what I'm looking for is that balance of where we can add value, where we can help, but not throw in bureaucracy that isn't going to add any value. So in, at, at the get-go, that's my plan for Eppley. I hope that helps.

DeBOER: OK, thanks.

FRIESEN: Thank you, Senator DeBoer. Any other questions from the committee? Senator Bostelman.

BOSTELMAN: Sure. Thank you for being here today. I have a couple questions for you. One is just a clarification question on the form. Here it says: source of income of over \$1,000, and you list the director at Martha Vineyard [SIC]. Could you just comment on that, why that's on there? On the source of income over \$1,000, list your government position if you were paid more than \$1,000-- airport director, Martha's Vineyard, airport commissioner, and the others. I think I know the answer.

ANN RICHART: Well, I think that's just my salary. I was interpreting that to be during the last year.

BOSTELMAN: I figured it was up to the point you come out here. That was how I saw it, too. But I--

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ANN RICHART: There's, there's no on--

BOSTELMAN: The reason why I ask is there is, there is no ongoing--

ANN RICHART: There's no--

BOSTELMAN: --with that facility, right?

ANN RICHART: --ongoing relationship, nope.

BOSTELMAN: And I figured that, too, but I wanted to ask that question. A couple things, other things to ask you about-- when we went through the hearing to merge Aeronautics and Transportation together, there was a lot of debate on the floor and concern on the floor about the current condition of our airports in the state, and the lack of funding to those facilities, and how we're going to ensure, through your position, that we begin to address those shortfalls to those airports, those facilities statewide. And I do know that-- I think there is a large grant that just came in for two airports-- federal funding come in to help there, but--

ANN RICHART: Three, actually.

BOSTELMAN: --having-- or and having said that, there was a lot of, especially from one senator who is a, who is a pilot-- he had a lot of concern as, as far as-- and his position was, and what he saw was a large need for, in our airports across the state, for bringing them-- and I think, more in his terms, not quoting him specifically, but they've been-- they've lacked any type of attention and we need to direct attention back to them. Have you-- I guess I just-- it'd be a question that would kind of come back to you as to what have you seen so far. You may have not had enough time yet. Are there specific areas you see throughout the state that need that type of attention?

ANN RICHART: There's a lot in there. Chair Friesen, Senator Bostelman, I'm so happy you asked that question. And the first part of that is the fact that there are state senators that recognize that we have a need at our airports statewide is great, because that means half of my job is done already. So I'm, I'm delighted that you and this other senator have recognized that we do need to work on our airports. However, I don't think that the organizational structure is the big, big challenge that's going to make a difference there. As I said in my earlier comments, the industry is changing the way that, well, the type of aircraft that are in use, other kinds of technology, both in

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airspace and in infrastructure, maintenance, and development-- that has all changed. And the way that people use aviation has changed. So, so I'm kind of laying out a couple of answers here. One is I really believe-- and Director Schneweis and I have talked about this extensively-- that with the merger and taking our pretty sparse, but smart, staff of aviation professionals in aeronautics and having them not have to worry about financial reporting, and human resources, and technology, and IT, and all of that kind of stuff, and allowing them to just focus on maximizing the amount of grant money that we get from the FAA, keeping up to date on new technologies so that we know if we're going to make an investment at an airport, that we're making an investment on the latest and the best, not some old technology. I think that that's-- has already created efficiencies that we've already seen more money going into our airports. So I'm looking forward to continuing to milk those efficiencies that we get out of being a part of a larger organization, so that we can turn that money back out to the airports. Then the next step is the aviation system plan that we discussed a little bit. I'm really looking forward to using that to really get in, in depth to some of the, well, all of the airports but, particularly, I want to hear from the smaller communities that maybe think they get bypassed or aren't being recognized, to make sure that we understand the value of that airport to the community and what it would really take to fully utilize it. And that way, we can be smart about how we make investments in the future, so taking this merger in order to milk all the possible efficiencies out that we can, and then turn around and spending that money in the smartest way we can to make sure that we maximize our value to the airports. That's what I see us doing in the years to come. Did I answer your question?

BOSTELMAN: You gave me a good feel for what you're--

ANN RICHART: OK.

BOSTELMAN: --where you're at with it, and that's fine. And I appreciate that because that was, that was-- some of the concern was, was that-- it has been, or was stated-- is just that there was, I think, a lack of interest or a lack of support in some areas. And it sounds like you have that interest or [INAUDIBLE] to do that. And I think that would come into that new evaluation, because I really see-- I guess there's maybe five different areas that we see, as far as I perceive-- and you can correct me or add to it-- is one, is we have cargo. Two is we-- as far as air, how we use our airports; cargo is

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one; then we have commercial people traveling, traveling. Then we have an agricultural base. We have, you know, in our rural communities aerial sprayers are critical--

ANN RICHART: Um-hum.

BOSTELMAN: --to where we're at. Another area that we work on, that I work on, is for air "evacs," air evacuation medical-- a huge need. We still don't have our hand, arms wrapped around that one quite yet on the EMS side. That's where that coverage really is and where it needs to be so we make sure our state is covered. And then, also then, we'll have our Air Guard and our, and our active duty--

ANN RICHART: Um-hum.

BOSTELMAN: --flight areas that we have throughout the state, both low level, high level, and then just the facilities themselves with airports or landing facilities, Air Guard camps-- whatever they are-- in the state. So there's a lot of a mix there so when we go into that-- I'd like to go out and look at these hopefully. What I've heard from you articulate for me was that the concern will be how those airports, those facilities, function within that community, within that area, and how best to support that if-- in those generic frameworks. Is that--

ANN RICHART: That's absolutely correct, yes.

BOSTELMAN: OK. All right, thank you.

ANN RICHART: Thank you.

FRIESEN: Thank you, Senator Bostelman. Any other questions? Senator Geist.

GEIST: One quick one. And we've already met--

ANN RICHART: Um-hum.

GEIST: --and chatted a bit. But do you have anything that you see currently as an obstacle-- and maybe you call it an opportunity, either one-- but, but something that you see that needs to be overcome to really fulfill your goals?

ANN RICHART: Chair Friesen, Senator Geist, that-- what a good question; thank you very much. I, I've spent my first two weeks going

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around the state, trying to just understand what people are looking for and what people hope of me. So far I haven't, I haven't run into any obstacles at all.

GEIST: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: I did go to Kansas City last week to meet with the FAA in this region, and I think that FAA is a little bit concerned that they had a really good relationship with this agency. And so how is that going to change? And so that's not an obstacle and that's not something that I would worry about, but I think our relationship with the FAA will change a little bit because I bring experience with airport management-- and really working hard to make sure that I'm getting the most possible grant money out of the FAA. And so they're going to start seeing that we'll have a lot more requests. And we did have-- last week the announcement was made that we got three additional grants out of supplemental funding from the FAA. And Congress is just now working on the next budget, which includes more funding for some more supplemental grant coffers. So things like that are, are-- we are not going to leave any stone unturned where it comes to funding for our airports. And I think that's-- I mean, there's no question that we have more need than resources, and so those kinds of opportunities for outside money that we can use. Particularly-- and I've seen FAA really appreciate when states can, rather than put forward a funding request for one airport, if we can find ways to kind of work together and make one request for multiple airports, that works really, really well, and that's one of the kind of different ways of doing things that I'm, I'm looking for. And I do think, again, while that's not an obstacle, I think that's a definite opportunity where we can use some, some partnering to help us all move ahead.

GEIST: Thank you.

ANN RICHART: Um-hum.

FRIESEN: Thank you, Senator Geist. Senator Albrecht.

ALBRECHT: Just one more question. Do you get involved with the Offutt Air Force Base and the issues that they are now having because of the floods? Is that going to be under your supervision? Or--

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ANN RICHART: Chair Friesen, Senator Albrecht, so far not. But in my experience in the past, I've always been surprised at what comes along.

ALBRECHT: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: And so there could be some situation where, because of floods or because of something at Offutt, they need another emergency landing area or something like that-- so there could be a situation where we would work with them.

ALBRECHT: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: And that's exactly the kind of thing where I would like to build a relationship--

ALBRECHT: Um-hum.

ANN RICHART: --just so that if that situation happens, they already know who to call and they're, you know, they feel open-- and let's call NDOT Aeronautics; maybe there's something that they can do for us.

ALBRECHT: Knowing that the President of the United States flew into Offutt right after 9/11, it's important to know that that is a hub for our nation, so--

ANN RICHART: Yeah, absolutely. Thank you.

FRIESEN: Thank you, Senator Albrecht. Any other questions from the committee? So on Saturday, the first, there is a fly-in at Central City, if your schedule would allow. But--

ANN RICHART: Yeah.

FRIESEN: I know the previous director has shown up there sometimes, so--

ANN RICHART: Is that Gordon Airport?

FRIESEN: No, Central City. It's -- be about an hour and 15 minutes from here, driving. But--

ANN RICHART: So Chair Friesen, I'm embarrassed to note this, but there is a, the state fly-in in Gordon on--

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FRIESEN: OK.

ANN RICHART: June 1st, and I'll be going there. So I apologize.

FRIESEN: I just, just letting you know because I--

ALBRECHT: And Pender--

FRIESEN: --I was going to be at this one--

ALBRECHT: --and Pender at the end of the month.

FRIESEN: I, I assumed you'd probably have, have a schedule already. But they're always a, they're a pretty progressive airport, too. So in other states, their structure of how their airports operate-- I mean in Nebraska, I think there's some of them that have some city input, county. Some of them are-- might be privately owned, so to speak, or, or airport authorities. Is the structure similar to other states or is this unique to Nebraska, the way there's such a wide variety of--

ANN RICHART: No. Chair Friesen, this is exactly how most states operate. In my career as an airport manager, I've been a city employee and a county employee and a state employee, so-- and the fact that we-- the state own and operate three airports, that's about typical. I mentioned earlier that, when I was with the state of Oregon, we owned and operated 36 airports. That's unique for an airport-- I mean for a state to operate so many airports. So I think the Nebraska situation where there's really one 800-pound gorilla that's an authority, and then a bunch of other municipal airports, I think that's, that's common.

FRIESEN: OK. Well, I know we've visited before, too, and so I, I don't really have any other questions, I guess. Thank you for coming and--

ANN RICHART: Thanks for your time; I appreciate it.

FRIESEN: With that, we will close the hearing.

TIP O'NEILL: You didn't ask for any [INAUDIBLE].

FRIESEN: Oh, yeah. Is there anybody else who wants to testify? I should-- was supposed to ask for proponents and opponents and--

GEIST: And neutral testimony.

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FRIESEN: --and neutral.

ALBRECHT: And neutral.

FRIESEN: So if anybody else wanted to testify.

_____ : I'm not here to talk.

FRIESEN: All right. With that, we'll close the hearing. Thank everyone for coming.