

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate August 7, 2024

KELLY: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber for the eighth day of the One Hundred Eighth Legislature, First Special Session. Our chaplain for today is Senator von Gillern. Please rise.

von GILLERN: Good afternoon. Please join me in an attitude of prayer. Lord, today we ask for your wisdom and grace, your heart for all of your children. We invite you to use us, your willing servants, to do your will to do good things for all Nebraskans. Give us health, stamina, reasoned minds and supernatural energy. Make us quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger, and always forgiving. Keep us safe as we travel and watch over and protect our families as we're apart. We ask all these things in your precious name. Amen.

KELLY: I recognize Senator Brandt for the Pledge of Allegiance.

BRANDT: Please join me in the pledge. I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

KELLY: Thank you. I call to order the eighth day of the One Hundred Eighth Legislature, First Special Session. Senators, please record your presence. Roll call. Mr. Clerk, please record.

CLERK: There's a quorum present, Mr. President.

KELLY: Are there any corrections for the Journal?

CLERK: I have no corrections this, this afternoon, sir.

KELLY: Are there any messages, reports, or announcements?

CLERK: There are, Mr. President. Series of motions and amendments from Senator Conrad to LB9. Senator Erdman, amendment to LB9. Senator Lowe, amendment to LR3CA. Senator Conrad, a series of floor amendments to LB37, and floor amendments to LB38, floor amendments to-- Senator Lowe, floor amendment to LB13. Senator Conrad, amendment to be printed to LB2. Senator Erdman, motions to be printed to LB9. Senator Lowe, motions to be printed to LR3CA. Senator Lowe, motion to be printed LB13. Senator Conrad, motion to be printed to LB37. Senator Conrad, motion to be printed to LB38. Senator Conrad to LB4. Senator Conrad to LB6. Senator Hughes, amendments to be printed to LB9, as well as motions to be printed to LB9. New A bill, LB9, introduced by Senator Hughes. It's a bill for an act relating to appropriations; to

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appropriate funds to aid in the carrying out of the provisions of LB9; and declare an emergency. Additionally, notice that the Health and Human Services Committee will be meeting in Executive Session today under the south balcony at 1:45. Health and Human Services, 1:45, under the south balcony. That's all I have this time, Mr. President.

KELLY: Senator Brandt would like to recognize some guests, all relatives under the south balcony. They are Harvey Brandt, Kathleen Brandt, Daryl Wollenburg, Joann Wollenburg, and Julie Nelson. Please stand and be recognized by our Nebraska Legislature. Speaker Arch, you are recognized for an announcement.

ARCH: Thank you, Mr. President. Colleagues, the first item on the agenda today is LB4. I just wanted to remind people, in my July 24 memo, I indicated that the appropriation bill funding the expenses for the special session, that is LB4, is a very narrow bill. And so I have-- I have limited-- I have-- I have said that a motion for cloture will be in order after 1 hour of each stage of debate. I just wanted to remind everybody about that. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB4-- as it pertains to LB4, Senator Conrad would move to indefinitely postpone the bill pursuant to Rule 6, Section 3(f).

KELLY: Speaker Arch, you're recognized to open on the bill.

ARCH: Thank you, Mr. President. Good afternoon, colleagues. LB4 is the bill that allows for the appropriation of funds to cover the expenses of this special session. As introduced, the bill calls for a total appropriation of \$149,808, \$86,753 for Program 122, which covers the per diem for members, \$37,607 for Program 123, which covers costs associated with the Clerk's Office, including pay for pages and red coats, and \$2,500 for Program 127, the Revisor's Office. These calculations by our Accounting Office are estimated costs for a 10-day session. Today is our eighth day of this special session, so clearly this bill will have to be amended to reflect the additional costs that will accrue if we go past Day 10. For now, I ask for your green vote to move LB4 to Select File. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Speaker Arch. Senator Conrad, you're recognized on the motion.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. Good afternoon, colleagues. I filed this motion because I think it's premature that we take up this matter

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at this time and also to help structure debate for today and moving forward, as we have not yet had a chance to engage in debate and deliberation on now, the eighth day of the extraordinary session of the Nebraska Legislature. And so that since this is our first opportunity to help to speak to Nebraskans, to build a record, to frame the issues, and to take up strategic and substantive issues related to the extraordinary session, I wanted to make sure to have this motion in place to lay out some present thinking that has been a big part of our dialogue together with each other, with our constituents, in the press, with the executive branch, with other stakeholders, and as the senator in the body with the second most seniority, behind only my friend Senator Aguilar, of course, we've had an opportunity to work through a host of different special sessions that have been called forward for legitimate reasons during our longer tenure in service to our state. Some senators had an opportunity to engage on a special session in relation to delays in redistricting due to the COVID pandemic in recent years. But here we find ourselves called into special session by Governor Pillen under very different circumstances. And I want to make sure to contextualize how we found ourselves in this moment to ensure that we do not normalize what is happening in our state government. There is no doubt that the Governor has the legal ability under the Nebraska Constitution to call the Legislature in for an extraordinary session, colloquially known as a special session. Typically, governors have utilized that power in a judicious and thoughtful manner to take up issues that were unforeseen in the interim period and that couldn't be taken up in the regular session, whether that be an economic crisis, a natural disaster, something that happened with a court case that threw a wrench into our revenue systems or key aspects of our criminal justice system, an unintended consequence from legislation passed in a prior regular session. But I am not aware of a pattern in practice of governors utilizing their power under the Nebraska Constitution in such a careless and reckless way to facilitate nothing but a political do-over for a failed Governor, which is how we found ourselves at this moment today. Governor Pillen has a right to put forward his ideas to vehemently and voraciously advocate for them. He put them forward in the regular session. They were stopped by a diverse, broad, and strong coalition of Nebraska state senators across the state and across the political spectrum, not out of partisanship nor personal animus, but because they were poor policy. Stopping one of the largest tax increases in state history, which hits working families, seniors, and local businesses the hardest to benefit the wealthiest, largest landowners in Nebraska like Governor Pillen, is wrong. And utilizing a special session of the Legislature, paid for by Nebraska taxpayers to

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facilitate a political do-over for a failed Governor's failed plan is wrong. So it's right that we take this up when it comes to paying for this special session that we find ourselves in today, and it's important that we recognize that we should not legitimize nor normalize what is happening in Nebraska this summer. The Governor has a laudable goal to address property tax relief. That is something that we have worked together on collaboratively during my 10 years of service. Delivering, in the Governor's words, transformational property tax relief together just the session before. However, when the Governor seeks to engineer one of the largest tax increases and largest tax shifts that has been met with opposition because it's not sound policy. Trying to rewrite the state budget, the school funding formula and the tax code in a hastily organized special session is unserious at best and dangerous at worst. And here we find ourselves in a chaotic situation. Hearings are being called with no notice for the public. The public is taking time away from work to drive across the state to plea for thoughtfulness in the proposals that are coming forward. As I'm giving this speech at this moment, members are having press conferences in the Rotunda to announce changes to our education policy that were never once brought forward to the Education Committee, which I am a member of. We have not Execed on any policy, we have not discussed any policy, and we are left to listen to press conferences in the Rotunda about what's happening. As Nebraskans, we have a proud and strong tradition of transparency and thoughtfulness in how we approach our work that has been thrown out the window in this special session and it's wrong. It's wrong for this Legislature to facilitate an abuse of power by a Governor intent on lining his own pockets. It's wrong to delay. It's wrong to hide the ball. It's wrong to give senators and citizens no notice of issues that impact their lives that are being decided here today. And we have an opportunity to come together and stand in our powers as the people's branch and say no. These issues are important, but they can be taken up during regular session with deliberation, with thoughtfulness, in a spirit of dynamic collaboration and compromise, with notice and opportunity to be heard to the public, to the citizens that we serve, to the citizens that are paying the bill for this special session which is running up the tab each and every day the Legislature goes on with no plan, no end in sight, and no thoughtfulness in our deliberations. That is anathema to how we do our work in Nebraska. That is Washington-style political shenanigans that we should turn away from and stand proudly in having public hearings, having notice, having good fiscal notes, having appropriate debate, having a clear schedule. None of those things are on display during this special session and that's not normal. Special sessions are meant to take up discrete, unforeseen

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issues that we cannot take up in regular session. Not political do-overs for failed political plans. And we need to be honest about that. That's why prior special sessions did not last long, that were a better value to taxpayers, that had dynamic collaboration leading up to gavel in, to ensure an efficient and effective process. They weren't chaotic in scheduling. They didn't haul citizens in from all corners of the state with no notice. They didn't change the schedule on senators every day. Just because the Governor or the Speaker or legislative leadership can do something, doesn't mean they should do something. And we need to ground--

KELLY: One minute.

CONRAD: --ourselves in our history, in our experience, in our commitment to open government, in our commitment to thoughtful policy, and we need to be unafraid to speak truth to power for fomented political pressure to double down on bad policy. So I look forward to a great debate on LB4. I'm excited to continue the debate on the issues that will come before us. As predicted, Governor Pillen's plan is already dead on arrival and has been declared such in the early days of this session. And now, instead of walking away with dignity, we're getting hijacks, hodgepodge, Frankenstein, cover of night, no notice, no deliberation. That's not a way to legislate no matter who you are or what the issue is. And it's time that we stood up and were unafraid to speak truth to power on behalf of Nebraska citizens who are footing this bill. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Conrad, and you are next in the queue. Senator Hunt, you're recognized to speak.

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. Good afternoon, Nebraskans. Good afternoon, colleagues. We've been walking around the floor this morning-- this afternoon saying good morning to each other on accident. And I joke because I just woke up because many people know that I'm a night owl. So I like these afternoon sessions. They work for me. What I feel like I'm doing right now is Senator Hunt is clocking in to taxpayer-funded playtime. This feels completely recreational to me. It feels like you all missed each other so much and you wanted to do summer camp or something like that. And the issue of property taxes is something that I take seriously, that I know all of us take seriously. This is an issue that we campaigned on, that we made promises to our constituents about, not necessarily that we would find a solution, but that we would try, we would work, we would take the issue seriously. We would take their pain seriously as homeowners, as property owners, as people who want to stay in their homes and grow

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their families. But it's impossible for me to take this special session seriously because all of you aren't taking it seriously. The Governor is not taking it seriously. All of these conversations that have happened over the last several months under dark of night, secret plans, no one else included. The Revenue Committee meeting, having unofficial Executive Sessions without all the members of the committee present. The introducer of the vehicle for-- I almost said Senator Pilleen, for Governor Pilleen's bill, running the hearing herself when it was her bill that she introduced. There are-- there's, there's instance and instance and instance, on and on and on, of ways that procedure has been ignored and so how can we expect Nebraskans to take this session seriously? How can we take this session seriously? This week, next week, this is when our kids are going back to school. This is when Nebraskans are getting their sports physicals and buying their 2-pocket folders and their number 2 pencils and getting their kids together. And we're expecting them at this time to (a) understand that we're in a special session, (b) figure out when they're going to be able to come in and testify about the fact that every single thing that they go and buy at the grocery store, everything that they need to get to run their lives and, and get along is going to be going up in taxes because of the work that we're doing down here to screw up their lives to pacify the ego of one man, who I Freudian slipped called Senator Pilleen. You know, Senator Moser is term limited, maybe Governor Pilleen should run for his seat if he wants to legislate so badly. He's got lots of ideas. And the Legislature, every step of the way, has been willing to carry those ideas, not as a separate branch of government, not following the procedures that we have in our branch of government, including adequate notice for hearings. There was a hearing yesterday for an amendment in the Revenue Committee that didn't have adequate notice, that people didn't know was happening, to say nothing of expecting people to get childcare, to take time off work, to compose their thoughts, to come down. And then when they do that, their Chairwoman of the committee, Senator Linehan, berates them for coming in opposition. All of us in this body were listening to those hearings, Revenue Committee. I have a lot to say about how those were run. The Governor's radical plan to rewrite the tax code, to change the state budget, to change the school funding formula over the span of what, a week? And you may come in here and say, no, it hasn't just been a week. It hasn't just been a week. We've been meeting about this all summer. You've been meeting about this all summer with the Governor, with his lackeys, with his goons, with the people who have been telling you as duly elected state--

KELLY: One minute.

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HUNT: --senators sent to represent the people who put you here, you've been saying, yes, sir, where do I sign? How high? We have not had time to deliberate this, and we have had good ideas going back-- you know, generations of senators, property taxes have been a problem in Nebraska since statehood. So I don't know why we Fulbright scholars down here think that we're going to solve this in a week or two. And I will speak more to the problems with process on my next time on the mic. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Hunt. Senator Dungan, you're recognized to speak.

DUNGAN: Thank you, Mr. President, and good afternoon, colleagues. I do rise today considering MO91, the IPP on LB4, but I mostly wanted to get up and take this opportunity to talk a little bit about the special session echoing some of the concerns that have been brought up by my colleagues already. Colleagues, when I discuss politics with my wife and we discuss issues, she always delineates or separates out process and content. We can have debates against the process or about the process of how things work, and we can have debates about the content, and it seems to me that a conversation around funding the special session is a really good opportunity to have a conversation about the process with which the special session has been conducted and is continuing to be conducted as time goes on. I don't want to belabor a lot of the same points that have already been made, but what I do want to talk about is that as a-- as a relatively new senator here in the Nebraska Legislature, having been here for 2 years, there's a lot of things that happen that have been normalized, and I've had a number of conversations with senators that have come before me who were here for decades prior to being term limited out. I've talked to a number of subject-matter experts who have been around the building for decades, and the one pervasive sentiment that they've shared with me is that this special session is not normal. This is not the way that we conduct business. This is not the intention for a special session. What I continue to say to people who ask me questions about this is that my understanding is a special session is intended to address a finite issue. It's intended to be constrained as a response to an emergency situation. And so to treat the special session and to call back the legislators at the expense of the taxpayer dollar in an effort to address a broad issue that has been talked about every session that I've paid attention to the Legislature is outside the confines and the bounds of what a special session's intention is. I will echo the sentiment that I've said the entire time we've been talking about this. Property taxes are a problem. When I talk to my constituents, they agree that property taxes are a problem.

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But when I talk to my constituents, literally bumping into them at the grocery store about the special session, every single one that is not hyperbolic, every single person that I've talked to about the special session has said I want property tax relief but not like this, not like this. And I find it interesting that there's not been more of a response from the Legislature to push back on that. You know, one of the things that I think has been normalized in the time that I've been in the Legislature is the fact that we answer to the executive branch. And what I've said time and time again, and I will continue to echo, is that I want us as a body-- it doesn't matter if you're a Republican, a Democrat, or a nonpartisan, I want us as a body to come together and to stand in our power as a legislative branch and stand up for what we know is right. Stand up for the idea that we are actually beholden to taxpayers and that we owe it to the taxpayers to not waste their money on a plan that is already dead on arrival. Americans for Prosperity, many of you know that organization, they launched a website recently that calculates the cost of the special session. And it's actually really-- it's kind of fun to watch, it's a clock. And for every second that it goes up, it increases the amount of time or, I'm sorry, the amount of money that the special session is costing us. Now, I've not seen their, their formula for how it's being equated, but as of-- as I'm speaking, we're at 13 days, 13 hours, 30 minutes and 54 seconds and the cost of the session is \$244,000 to taxpayers. And, yet, we continue to drag it out. I am willing to do the hard work and my colleagues are willing to do the hard work. There have been numerous bills introduced by Republicans and Democrats and nonpartisans over the years since I've been here, even in the last 2 years on the Revenue Committee, that deliver property tax relief. There have been a number of bills that have been introduced that give you targeted property tax relief--

KELLY: One minute.

DUNGAN: --thank you, Mr. President-- that is not giving windfalls to massive corporations. That's not giving windfalls to millionaires both in state and out of state. And I just-- I think it's important that we highlight that this is not a normal thing. This is not a normal way to utilize a special session. And I want, I guess, for myself and my other colleagues that are new to the Legislature to remember this is not how we should be conducting ourselves. Certainly, we are here to do the hard work. Certainly, we are here to do the work of the people. And I have friends who call me saying I do need property tax relief, and I completely agree with that. And I will do everything in my power as a legislator and as a member of the Revenue Committee as we move forward to continue to try to find ways to deliver actual targeted

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property tax relief. But I do object to the process with which this has gone. I do object to the usage of a special session in this way, shape, and form,--

KELLY: That's your time.

DUNGAN: --and I do object to the money the taxpayers are paying for the special session. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Dungan. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in support of LB4. It's the only thing that I will vote for in this special session because our staff deserves to be paid. This is infuriating for everyone. I know it is for everyone. Whether you support what is attempting to be accomplished here or not, this entire process has been frustrating and infuriating. This is my second special session. I was here in 2021 for the special session on redistricting, and that was something that, as Senator Conrad said, discrete and it needed to happen. It had to happen, everybody in the country had to do it. And we did that special session in 13 days, 13 legislative days over 2.5 weeks, consecutively. We knew what the schedule was. We showed up for the schedule. We stayed and did the work until the work was done. I remember being in this building until midnight almost every night working on maps, talking about maps, people negotiating back and forth, running up and down the halls, working with bill drafters, everybody learning a new software program on map drawing. And we did the work. We didn't take a few days off to rest because we knew this work needed to happen and needed to happen in a timely manner, and everyone in the country had to do their maps. It had to happen. What we are doing now is not only is it unnecessary, and I am-- I'm-- I am pretty fed up with everybody saying we must solve property taxes. This state has had a Republican Governor and a Republican-led Legislature for decades. And you act like I am the obstruction to property taxes. I voted against LB1107 because it wasn't property tax relief, and now everybody agrees that it needs to be-- front-load LB1107. So don't tell me that I don't care about property taxes. I've been fighting for us to do property taxes the right way since I got here. But I refuse to be forced to hand the Governor an unloaded gun to manufacture a crisis, and point it at all of us, and say we must do this now. This is the wrong way. This is the wrong way to legislate. This is the wrong way to run appropriations, to run a budget, to run a state. We should be doing very serious work during the interim. We should be having interim hearings on property taxes so that we can craft together, collaboratively, a thoughtful

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property tax relief package in January. We should not be doing this now, and we certainly shouldn't be doing it at the whims of scheduling changing from day to day. And I do not appreciate getting an email yesterday, late in the day, telling me that the schedule has changed, yet again, for this week. And I don't think that our staff appreciates that. And I know that my family doesn't appreciate it. This is sloppy. Everything about this is sloppy. The Governor is trying to peer pressure us publicly into passing property tax relief for him. Period. This is beginning, middle, and end about Jim Pillen getting over \$1 million in property tax relief every single year for the rest of his life.

KELLY: One minute.

M. CAVANAUGH: That is all this is about. It is not about helping Nebraskans. It is not about helping vulnerable populations. It is just about the Governor and everyone who votes for his plans, whatever iteration of them, that's what you are doing. You are not helping my constituents. You are not helping your constituents. You are just helping Jim Pillen and I am fed up and disgusted by it. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Cavanaugh. Senator McKinney, you're recognized to speak.

McKINNEY: Thank you, Mr. President. I guess if Machaela is for LB4, I'm probably-- I probably am, too. But I wanted to stand up to talk about property taxes and why we're here. But, first, I wanted to say that since I haven't had time to speak on the mic since we've been back, I would like to say rest in peace to Sonja Massey. She was killed by a police officer in her home when she called the police officer for help. But instead of helping her, he took her life. He's since been charged with murder. But it brought back to me the conversation that we still should have in this state and in this country, that we need real police reform and oversight and transparency. This officer worked at, I believe, 6 police departments in 4 years. But because we don't have real reform in this country around policing holding police accountable, she was killed. She called for help and she died because she called for help. And then people wonder why black communities and Latino communities are hesitant to call the police, because we don't know if we're going to be killed in our homes if we call them, even if we're asking for help. So with that, I'll say again, rest in peace to Sonja Massey. But on the topic of why we're here for a special session, I think if we're here for a special session and property taxes are such of importance that we

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should be back here in the middle of the summer, everything should have been able to be placed on the table and, and equitably considered or equally considered under consideration. One of those things is the legalization of marijuana. All of our neighbor states are going to legalize it, and we're going to sit on the sideline and not tax it, not bring in revenue that could help with property tax reform and education funding. I think we also need to think about renters and passing a renters tax credit so renters are helped. Because even if we pass property tax relief to property owners that rent out homes, they're still going to keep upping their rents every year. And I guarantee it. We're not even talking about freezing rents or something like that for renters, but we're going to claim we're giving property tax relief. But renters are getting no relief on top of paying more in sales taxes for different products and services. So that's something we definitely should think about. And, lastly, if we're really talking about property tax relief, we should rethink spending \$350 million on a prison that, that we don't need. That's going to be overcrowded day one. And we also need to consider a lot of changes within our criminal justice system, releasing individuals who have served long sentences but have showcased the ability to change themselves while incarcerated. So if we're really talking about property tax relief and doing something for the people in Nebraska, I cannot take any of this serious if we're not considering legalizing marijuana, a renters tax credit, and making changes to our criminal justice system. So thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator McKinney. Senator John Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Colleagues, I didn't think I'd get to talk to you again in 2024. So for what that's worth, I guess I'm happy to be here to see you all. So I rise in opposition to the IPP and in favor of LB4 because I do agree with my colleagues that the one thing here is certain is that the staff deserves to be paid. And we're-- this is an appropriate time, I think, to have the conversation about process. And we all know how this started. The Governor issued the proclamation less than 24 hours before we were set to start here in a orchestrated attempt to prevent us from bringing forward our proposals, and so that we would only have the option that he wanted on the table. Of course, all of us worked ahead. A lot of go-getters around here. So we had some suggestions ready to bring. And, of course, the Governor's proposal is not moving forward. We know that. So right from the get-go, there was an intentional effort to prevent actual engagement. The Governor did town halls across the state intentionally skipping the two largest communities, Omaha and Lincoln.

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Fortunately, a bipartisan group of senators got together and gave those citizens an opportunity to be heard. Because even if we disagree with folks, we should probably still let them have their chance of being heard. And now we have today a hearing on two amendments with less than 24 hours of notice of any kind, but in failing to comply with the rule of actual notice. And I know if folks from the Revenue Committee have an opportunity to speak, they will point out that the rules for the special session and the actual rules are silent on a requirement of a hearing for an amendment. I would point you all to the rule that indicates that when our rules are silent, we go to common practice. And the common practice has always been that the actual notice requirement applies to hearings on amendments as well. And the rule, actual notice requires publication in the Journal. For some reason, and I don't know what the reason was, we had to rush to have that hearing this morning, which actually prevented citizens from having an opportunity to be meaningfully heard. The reason for the notice, the reason and the spirit, which at least would say that what we did today, the Revenue Committee did today, violates the spirit of the rule, if not the letter. But the spirit is giving people a meaningful opportunity to participate and be heard. That's why we give people notice and an opportunity to come to the hearings so we can learn their perspective and we can integrate those into the bills. But it's another one of the steps along the way here where we are purposefully speeding up the process so that we can cut off conversation, input, changes. Others have addressed the fact that this-- the timing, the agenda has changed almost daily since we got called. No one knows day to day what we're going to be talking about here or what's going to happen. Citizens are emailing my office and asking what's going to happen tomorrow. So this is not the way to do this. This is not how we have an actual constructive conversation about this very complicated issue that touches almost everyone, if not everyone in the state of Nebraska's life. And we need--

KELLY: One minute.

J. CAVANAUGH: --thank you, Mr. President-- we need to have conversations in the light of day, in a constructive way, with an opportunity to meaningfully be heard. And I would just point out, additionally, one of the reasons we don't know what we're doing is because we're rushing, we're putting too much strain on the professional staff of this Legislature. The Bill Drafting Office does not have time to keep up with 140-page, or whatever it's going to be, bills being expected to turn around in 1 day. It's not their fault that they can't keep up with that, that's an unreasonable request that we're making of them because we're putting an artificial constraint on

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this session. If this were a regular session, we would have all of these things aired in the light of day. We'd have the opportunity to have a meaningful conversation. We have the opportunity to have these bills drafted and review them in a timely fashion. And, realistically, we would have all these bills go to different committees and have subject-matter hearings on them and they would come out separately as opposed to Frankenstein together. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Cavanaugh. Senator Day, you're recognized to speak.

DAY: Thank you, Mr. President, and good afternoon, colleagues. I'm going to echo some of the sentiments of some of the folks who have been on the mic already this afternoon. I would tell you that as someone who represents a portion of Sarpy County, many of us came in here into this special session taking this issue very, very seriously. Over the course of the months since the previous session had ended, I have received an unbelievable amount of correspondence from constituents who are unhappy with their property tax increases. We're talking about, you know, 30%, 40% in valuation increase over the course of a year. And there are legitimately people who are possibly going to have to move because of property taxes. This is an issue that some of us take very, very seriously. And we came into this special session in good faith introducing pieces of legislation that we were hoping would be considered with equal weight as any of the other pieces of legislation that were introduced. But that's not what's happening. We had a bill during regular session, LB388, it failed on cloture, essentially because it was a tax shift. We would be taking property taxes, reducing property taxes by increasing taxes on low- and middle-income families who the overwhelming majority of Nebraskans would have paid more in taxes through this proposal. It failed. So at that point, the Governor and some of my colleagues started a group who was meeting regularly over the course of the summer to discuss how to solve the property tax issue. I think some of those people went into those meetings, again, in good faith hoping that any and all ideas would be considered and be-- and be given equal weight. And that's not what happened. The concept that was introduced last session that failed is essentially the exact same thing that we're talking about today, and it was the only thing that was actually discussed with any level of seriousness over the course of those meetings. And senators were not, were not given an equal say in any part of that. They were bullied. They were yelled at in the meetings. They were laughed at. A lot of like what happens on this floor. And that's essentially what's happened since the beginning of the session-- this special session. We have a proposal, once again, that is a reduction in property taxes,

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largely for the wealthiest landowners in the state. Up to 80% reduction in property taxes that is going to be paid for by low- and middle-income Nebraska families, because the people that are pulling the strings refuse to take in any input and into consideration any of the other things that we've discussed. They refuse to admit that the number one thing that could solve this problem is increasing revenue in the state of Nebraska. We have proposals for legalizing marijuana. We have proposals for online gambling, expanding gambling. None of that is given serious consideration because this is not about really solving property taxes. It's about the Governor and what he wants and forcing us to do it by tiring--

KELLY: One minute.

DAY: --thank you, Mr. President-- by tiring us down, by giving us an erratic schedule, by trying to use our bills-- in particular, one of mine, that is-- I have introduced four separate times as a senator to help reduce property taxes. That has never, not one time had any public opposition. And using, using that bill to help disabled veterans as a bargaining chip to pass a really terrible piece of legislation that's essentially the largest tax increase in Nebraska history, none of this is being done in good faith. And if we're going to be serious, then let's be serious about property taxes. But that's not what's happening. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Day. Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. Again, good afternoon, colleagues. As I appreciate the other senators who have weighed in and I want to put on the record, remind Nebraskans, remind my colleagues as the Speaker jumped up to talk on a nondebatable sine die motion that Senator Wayne filed in the early part of this session, he actually quite eloquently grounded my opposition for the illegitimacy-- legitimacy of this special session in his speech. Wherein he noted, rightly, property taxes have been contentious since statehood. We take them up every year. There is no reason to utilize an extraordinary session of the Nebraska Legislature paid for by taxpayers for a perennial issue. Any casual read of history knows that to be true. So let's not dress it up in rhetoric for political purposes. And no matter what we hear from Revenue Committee members or legislative leadership who seek to normalize this situation, it's not normal. It's not in line with our political history. It's not in line with how we do business in Nebraska. And you can hide the ball. You can cloud the math. You can use whatever language or insults that are coming our way

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might be. But let me be clear, nothing will distract nor deflect my view of what's happening from reality. You can dress it up. You can distract. You can hide the ball. You can do whatever you want. You can bend the rules. You can play games with the process. Nothing takes away the fact that you're trying to muscle through one of the largest tax increases in Nebraska history to be borne by those who can least afford it, seniors, working families, and local businesses to benefit the largest, wealthiest landowners. You want to help grandma stay in her house? You'd find 49 votes for that plan. And I'd be proud to stand with you to do that. Sustainable, equitable property tax relief. That's not what you're talking about. You're talking about a bait and switch of epic proportions, reversed Robin Hood, nickel and dime low-income working Nebraskans to death so large, wealthy landowners get a break and you're risking our schools. You're risking our fiscal policies. You're risking our future. And it's wrong-- and it's wrong. No matter how you dress it up, it's wrong. I know that this is new to many of you because of the term limits era, but you shouldn't utilize or lean into that lack of experience in acquiescence or facilitation of an abuse of power. You want to talk about sustainable, equitable, targeted property tax relief or even broad-based property tax relief that really helps out folks like Senator John Cavanaugh has brought forward, Senator Day has brought forward, Senator Blood has brought forward, the new revenue stream Senator McKinney, Senator Wayne, Senator Bostar, and others have brought forward. We'd be delighted to have that conversation. But you're not, you won't let those bills come forward. And it's all foot on the gas for Governor Pillen's reverse Robin Hood plan. I think it's important we debate it. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to withdraw my motions and move to Senator Hunt's amendment.

KELLY: Without objection, so ordered. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, I also have M092 from Senator Conrad with a note that she would withdraw.

KELLY: Without objection, so ordered.

CLERK: And M093 Senator Conrad would withdraw.

KELLY: Without objection, so ordered.

CLERK: In that case, Mr. President, Senator Hunt would move to amend with AM46.

KELLY: Senator Hunt, you're recognized.

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CLERK: Apologies, Mr. President. LB4, introduced by Speaker Arch at the request of the Governor. It's a bill for an act relating to appropriations; to appropriate funds to aid-- to appropriate funds for the expenses incurred during the One Hundred Eighth Legislature, First Special Session, 2024; and declare an emergency. The bill was read for the first time on July 25 of this year. Placed directly on General File. Senator Hunt would move to amend with AM46.

KELLY: Senator Hunt, you're recognized to speak.

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. This is a serious amendment. It's one that we should support. It's one that the Governor should certainly support. It adds a new section which reduces the amount. It's, it's AM46. You all can look at it in your devices. And I have a copy here, too, if you'd like to see it. It reduces the amount appropriated to the Governor's Office for this fiscal year by the amount that the Legislature has appropriated for the special session according to the estimate that's currently in LB4. Of course, we don't know on August 7, 2024, if that's going to be what the special session costs. According to the calculator that Americans for Prosperity has put together, this special session has already cost nearly \$250,000. Or, as I would put it, and how I think of it, about a quarter of the tax benefit that Governor Pilleen is likely to receive if, if, if his plan passes. It's my understanding that the numbers in LB4 are just placeholder amounts for what the special session could cost, because nobody knows exactly how many days we're going to be here. In the news in his town halls, Governor Pilleen has said that he's willing to call as many special sessions as it takes. It sounds like behind the scenes in the deals that he's trying to make with all of you, he's willing to expand the call of the session. He's willing to do just about anything to achieve his God-given holy purpose of reducing property taxes by 50% so he can take home an extra million dollars a year. But because nobody knows how many days we will be here or what this will cost, and perhaps those numbers could be changed later, for now I stuck with the same amount in LB4 for consistency, \$126,860. We know, certainly, at this point that the special session is going to cost more than that. But since we're here, we can always amend that in the future. But in other words, this amendment, AM46, has the Governor's Office budget offset the costs for our special session. Governor Pilleen has commented frequently in the media and in his town halls that everybody has to give something. Everybody has to sacrifice something so that he, as one of the wealthiest landowners in Nebraska, can pay less in property taxes. You have to pay more for your groceries. You have to pay more for the goods and services that you do to get by, any kind of property tax relief that you could, Nebraskans, potentially see come

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out of this special session is certainly likely to be offset by the tax shift of the rising sales taxes that we will have. But Governor Pillen doesn't care about that. He doesn't care about how much taxpayer dollars he's wasting through this special session, which has-- doesn't have the votes, doesn't have a solid plan, has him scrambling behind the scenes in who knows how many group text messages which is, Nebraskans, probably 30-40% of how this special session has been legislated. If you'd like to know that. All of these things he's doing to try and get anything to stick. So if we're serious about this, if he's going to keep calling him over and over and over again till he gets his million dollars a year back, whatever it is, then I think he should be the one to pay for it. He's also said in the news-- let's see. In an interview with 10/11 news, Pillen said it is, quote, not even a cost as taxes continue to rise, referring to the cost of the special session. He said it's not even a cost. Quote, I mean, seriously, the cost of running a special session is pennies compared to our property tax increases. Our tax increasing that's taking place, it's going up like a rocket ship. If he believes that the cost of this session is pennies, then he should pay for that through his own budget as the Governor. He is the one who called us into this session. He is the one who has brought us in here to this bottomless pit of time without the votes, without a plan, scrambling now to rewrite the tax code to completely change the budget, to completely change education funding. And by the way, we are a one-house Legislature. We do not have a House and a Senate, but apparently now we're legislating by making pronouncements and proclamations in, what's it called, press conferences. We've got what we're doing in here at 1:00 when we convene, and we got whatever's going out-- on out in the Rotunda at 1:00, when the Chairwoman of Revenue Committee wants to have a press conference announcing a new plan for school funding. I appreciate that plans are being made, I appreciate that ideas are being tried, and I appreciate that we are ostensibly taking the property tax issue seriously. But when I look at the various, not just I, when we look at the various solutions that have been brought up by our colleagues and how they have been outright rejected by the Governor, not by us, not by our colleagues, not by members of the Legislature who actually hold the purse strings, who actually are in charge of the budget, who actually passed legislation, not the Governor. We aren't even willing to consider anything that doesn't have the rubber stamp of the Governor. One thing you could ask is why not just strike the places in LB4 that has funding for special session coming from the General Fund and replace it with Governor's Office budget. The reason-- I, I did want to do that initially, but we can't appropriate from one program to pay for another program directly to Legislative Council for special

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session. And we also just drafted it this way, AM46, for simplicity's sake, to avoid a conflict with an additional amendment to LB2, which would adjust the biennial budget as part of the Governor's special session budget. This is the biggest tax hike in history, colleagues and Nebraskans. This has been widely reported in the media. The Governor was afraid to come to Lincoln and Omaha, the two most populous parts of Nebraska, to defend his boondoggle, to defend his plan that enriches himself and leaves you with less money. It has little to no support from the electorate. According to Americans for Prosperity, a conservative organization, only 7% of Nebraskans support this plan in this special session. Senators don't want it, the people don't want it. And there's just the Governor and a couple supporters here in the body who are willing to sell out 49 of us, who are willing to sell out an independent branch of government, who are willing to be bought, who are willing to be bullied, who are willing to be begged for favor from the Governor. That could never be me. I could never go around mortified that my children, that my-- that my constituents, that people think that I could be begged or bought or bullied by Governor Pillen so that he can take home an extra million dollars a year. I take property taxes seriously. I support things like homestead exemptions. I support alternatives to school funding. I support things like legalizing gambling and weed and marijuana. I think we could bring Nebraska into 1996 and let people legally use a plant that a high percentage of Nebraskans are already using and decriminalize that process and make some money for the state in the process. I don't know why Governor Pillen or so many of you are so afraid of that. There are real solutions, and there are real ideas that are serious, that respect the electorate and that respect the process of this institution and the power that we have been bestowed by the people who sent us here, not by Governor Pillen, not by the group chat, not by a Revenue Committee Chair. And I think that we can start now to take this process seriously, to signal to Nebraskans that we are here in earnest to do good work, to help them by starting to take the budget for this special session out of the Governor's budget. So I would encourage you to vote green on AM46 and we can move forward. And,--

KELLY: One minute.

HUNT: --thank you, Mr. President-- and continue to negotiate in good faith and move past the fact that the only reason we are here, the only reason this situation exists, is because the small group meetings in dark rooms with a handpicked group of people didn't take negotiation seriously over the summer. They had only one plan in mind, and now they are scrambling for votes and deals, willing to be bullied and bought so that this failed Governor can have a bonus do-over for

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his bill that failed last April because his feelings are hurt. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Hunt. Senator Moser, you're recognized to speak.

MOSER: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor, and good afternoon, colleagues and Nebraskans that were waiting for the discussion to start. And your wait is over. The discussion has started. There's considerable angst and pent-up emotions over this. People have been waiting to have their opportunity to talk about the process and, and what we're trying to do here. But I, I don't think we should lose sight of the problem that we're trying to solve. Everybody said, not said, says that I talked to, property taxes are too high and they're out of balance with other forms of state revenue. And there's no way to reduce property taxes without having revenue to offset what you reduce property taxes by. And so that's the problem. That's why it's been talked about for decades. And we've nibbled around the edges and never really-- never really made a, a really big dent in the property tax problem. The bill is different than-- the current bill is different than LB388. LB388 was a whole different animal. It was for the same purpose, but it has different funding, different-- same purpose, but it's a different process. This bill, LB4, is to pay for the special session. I think we should vote on that. And then we move to the underlying bills and argue about those when it's time to talk about those and make whatever motions senators want to make to try to improve the bills as they move forward. I'm not real excited about being here either. I mean, this is a busy time of the year for, for me to be down here in Lincoln. But the enormity of the situation trumps my personal interests and so that's why I'm here. But the, the balancing of property taxes versus other forms of taxation will benefit anybody who owns property or anyone who rents property. And some complained that landlords would be greedy and they wouldn't reduce rents. But if property taxes go up, do you think they would increase rents? I would say yes. So however you look at it, property tax affects us all. And I would like to yield whatever time I have remaining to Senator Linehan, please.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Moser. Senator Linehan, you have 2 minutes, 12 seconds.

LINEHAN: Thank you, colleagues. Good afternoon. I, I don't really even know where to start here with the comments on the floor. I've been told many times, and I'm really bad at this, that you need to use emotion. Emotion. People don't follow numbers. So that's what we're

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seeing here today. We're seeing a lot of emotion with no facts. We, we talked about people who we're trying to reach and help with property taxes. Part of the pay-for, it's been in LB388, in this bill, and other bills that have been introduced is LB1107 property tax credit. Well, it's income tax credit for property taxes paid. Nobody likes it. It was put together because that's what we could do. Everybody thinks it would be far better if it went to the property tax payer. Right now, if you are rich, whatever that means, and you have an accountant, you get your property tax credit.

KELLY: One minute.

LINEHAN: If you aren't rich and you don't have an accountant, you're not claiming it. 50% or 45 to 50, I don't have the number right in front of me, I will have it when we ever get to a bill, don't claim the credit. So you have moderate, low-income people who have a credit due to them. They are not claiming it. I thought we were all in agreement that we needed to fix that problem. That's what we're trying to do here. We have talked about the earned income tax credit. That's part of the conversations. I'm-- will be part of the solution. This morning, the hearings everybody is screaming about or complaining, I should say, it was about we didn't have anybody bring a bill that said we shouldn't tax electricity. So we had a hearing this morning to say we--

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

LINEHAN: Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Linehan. Senator Blood, you're recognized to speak.

BLOOD: Thank you, Mr. President. Fellow senators, friends all, something I thought I'd not be saying again. First, I want to thank the Revenue Committee because I think you've been put in a bad position. I think our Governor is used to walking into a boardroom, telling people to get stuff done and walking out and expecting it to get done, and that is not how government works. And so I want to say that I do have empathy for Revenue because I feel they're being forced to do this. So right now by doing this, Nebraska government is literally taking our citizens for granted. We're taking them for granted because we are wasting tax dollars on a very unorganized special session that was called in an unorthodox way. Everything that I learned about this special session, I learned from the media. Thank goodness I watched the news. I don't read the Governor's newsletter. I

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missed that one, but I did see it in the news. When I look at our Governor making trade trips all over the United States that tend to pertain to his very industry that he is in charge of, it really brings pause. The special session, he gets a great tax break. He gets to do whatever he wants when he wants to do it. And, quite frankly, I think our Governor is a bully. Because when you respect the people that you work with at any job, you don't treat them this way. I don't work for Governor Pillen, with the exception that he is a Nebraskan and I represent Nebraskans, I represent District 3. And I'm telling you that had we not wasted time on some really dumb bills the last 2 years, giving in to special causes, giving in to the vocal minority, ignoring polling, ignoring surveys and passing bad bills, maybe we would have had property tax relief. But, boy, it was a lot more important to wave flags and say you did something on these causes and this is the price that we pay. You know, nobody's coming to me making deals. And, you know, nobody's surprised because I don't make deals, but is always very curious to hear the types of deals that people are trying to make. And, quite frankly, until the last 2 years, I loved the Nebraska Legislature because we are a one-house system, because we work together. But now we're like the federal government, a federal government that can't pass a budget. But, you know, they do a short-term budget and shove pork into it. No pun intended, Governor. But we can do better. And I'm like Senator Day and many of the other senators, like Senator Wayne, Senator Kauth, Senator Conrad, Senator McKinney, and I know there's more but that's all I can think of right now, we brought bills forward in good faith. I didn't bring forward smart-aleck bills. One of my bills would have generated \$500 million in revenue because I did a survey and Nebraskans told me that we needed to do a better job of taxing the wealthy. But now my bills are being ignored. My bill to stop unfunded mandates, which is apparently 22% of most of our counties' budgets that we have passed down and we have known for decades would raise property taxes because we're a Dillon's Rule state. That bill was the first bill to get out of committee-- thank you, Senator Brewer, for that-- 8-0 for the third time. Why are we not debating bills that are actually--

KELLY: One minute.

BLOOD: --finished, that have had the hearings, that have had the conversations? I was asked to bring things forward and that everything would be considered, and I call shenanigans on that. I wasted my time, my staff's time, my energy, my constituents' time for this. I feel like it's April Fool's Day. I feel like we are not being heard and, as usual, we are having things forced down our throats. And, quite frankly, I blame the executive branch. I don't blame Revenue because I

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think their hands are tied, and we need to give them a little bit of a break because, good lord, what's going on at the executive branch right now? Because it's not the Nebraska that I grew up in. It's not the Nebraska that I know. It's not the Nebraska I love. We used to do better. And if you didn't hear what Conrad had to say-- Senator Conrad, repeat-- listen to, to her next time she gets on the mic and talks about this. This is not how we do things in Nebraska. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Blood. Senator Hunt. Mr. Clerk, you have a motion on the desk.

CLERK: I do, Mr. President. Speaker Arch would move to invoke cloture pursuant to Rule 7, Section 10.

KELLY: Speaker Arch, for what purpose do you rise?

ARCH: Call the house and roll call, regular order.

KELLY: There has been a request to place the house under call. The question is, shall the house go under call? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 30 ayes, 4 nays to place the house under call, Mr. President.

KELLY: The house is under call. Senators, please record your presence. Those unexcused senators outside the Chamber, please return to the Chamber and record your presence. All unauthorized personnel, please leave the floor. The house is under call. Senators Lippincott, Bostar, and McDonnell, please return to the Chamber and record your presence. The house is under call. All unexcused members are now present. Members, the first vote is the motion to invoke cloture. There's been a request for a roll call vote. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Senator Aguilar voting yes. Senator Albrecht voting yes. Senator Arch voting yes. Senator Armendariz voting yes. Senator Ballard voting yes. Senator Blood voting yes. Senator Bosn voting yes. Senator Bostar voting yes. Senator Bostelman voting yes. Senator Brandt voting yes. Senator Brewer voting yes. Senator John Cavanaugh voting yes. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh voting yes. Senator Clements voting yes. Senator Conrad voting yes. Senator Day voting yes. Senator DeBoer voting yes. Senator DeKay voting yes. Senator Dorn voting yes. Senator Dover voting yes. Senator Dungan voting yes. Senator Erdman voting yes. Senator Fredrickson voting yes. Senator Halloran voting yes. Senator Hansen voting yes. Senator Hardin voting yes. Senator Holdcroft voting yes. Senator Hughes voting yes. Senator Hunt voting

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yes. Senator Ibach voting yes. Senator Jacobson voting yes. Senator Kauth voting yes. Senator Linehan voting yes. Senator Lippincott voting yes. Senator Lowe voting yes. Senator McDonnell voting yes. Senator McKinney voting yes. Senator Meyer voting yes. Senator Moser voting yes. Senator Murman voting yes. Senator Raybould. Senator Riepe voting yes. Senator Sanders voting yes. Senator Slama. Senator Vargas voting yes. Senator von Gillern voting yes. Senator Walz voting yes. Senator Wayne. Senator Wishart voting yes. Vote is 46 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on the motion to invoke cloture.

KELLY: The motion to invoke cloture is adopted. Members, the next vote is on the adoption of AM46. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 11 ayes, 33 nays, Mr. President, on the adoption of the motion or on the adoption of the amendment. Excuse me.

KELLY: AM46 is not adopted. Members, the question is the advancement of LB4 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 46 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB4 is advanced to E&R Initial. I raise the call. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. Some items: amendments to be printed to LB9A from Senator Hughes. Amendments to be printed to LB13 from Senator Lowe and LR3CA from Senator Lowe. Amendments to be printed to-- from Senator Hunt to LB2 and LB1. Motions to be printed to LB9A from Senator Hughes. Motion from Senator Day concerning LB30. Committee report from the Health and Human Services Committee on gubernatorial appointments to the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, as well as the Board of Emergency Medical Services. Mr. President, as it pertains to the daily agenda, next item, committee report from the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee concerning a gubernatorial appointment, Matthew J. McCarville as the Chief Information Officer for the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

KELLY: Senator Brewer, you're recognized to open.

BREWER: Thank you, Mr. President. The Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee held a appointment confirmation hearing on Dr. Matthew McCarville on 30 July. President-- Governor Pillen has appointed him to the position of Chief Information Officer, CIO. We had a chance to hear from Dr. McCarville and his uniquely Nebraska

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story. He had, I guess, what I would call a, a tough upbringing as a child and was in several group homes. He worked hard and was able to get multiple degrees at Creighton University. He has been the interim CIO, Chief Information Officer, security officer for the state of Florida. He's also the CIO for the University of Colorado in Denver. He wanted to come home and that's why he has taken a position here and brought home his, his wife and young child. His appointment was the first thing that we heard in committee here in the special session. And, and was the first Exec Session we held also. He's clearly qualified for the job. Now, the morning of the hearing, he, he did make a mistake. He instructed employees to send out a notice-- or he sent out a notice about the office-- the office and the position if they wanted employees to testify in legislative hearings. But then, with that, the office included a screenshot that included a Pillen campaign post. The post was identified-- Dr. McCarville self-reported to Accountability and Disclosure Commission. He sought guidance from them about how to right this error that he made. He also 'fessed up to us in the hearing and apologized. That caused doubts among some of the committee members and reported him out from the Government Committee with a vote of 5 in support and 3 present, not voting. I think he was honest in his mistake and owned up to it. We need to have public servants who can admit when they are wrong and they have made a, a mistake and are willing to work to fix that. I believe he's a good man and that he's more than qualified for the position. I would ask for your green vote and confirmation of him as the CIO for Nebraska. I believe that he's, he's the right person for the job. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Brewer. Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. And good afternoon, colleagues. As always, want to thank Chair Brewer for his excellent leadership of the Government Committee. And it was rather strange timing that we had this nominee come before the committee on the day of a very high-profile incident in regards to communications from his office were reported to us as senators by whistleblowers and, of course, picked up by the media as well. I agree with Chair Brewer that the nominee has a incredible educational background, a deep commitment to public service, a great deal of technical knowledge, and an incredibly compelling personal story. Unfortunately, much of that was clouded during the course of the committee deliberations and process but should definitely be lifted up because it is important. I, I also generally take the kind of approach that a Governor is entitled to put those into positions that he sees fit to carry out his mission and his

team. And unless there's some sort of really gross instance of government waste, fraud, and abuse or a history of discriminatory behavior or something really, really high level that, generally, the Legislature should, should allow for confirmation of the Governor's team as he sees fit. And I think that will happen today. But I, I do want to also lift up some broader issues that this nomination brings forward in relation to this special session. Colleagues, we're 8 days in, were no closer to resolution from when we started. And this isn't like a regular session. The Governor specified the timeline. The Governor sets the parameters of the call that he gave us less than 24 hours before we gaveled in. The Governor's bills get priority. The Governor's bills were dead on arrival. As predicted, he's already pivoted away from them. He's already moved to other matters. The Revenue Committee has agreed that the Governor's plan is too toxic and has collapsed under its own weight because it's poor policy and are now seeking to hijack other bills to carry out the reverse Robin Hood tax increase. Nevertheless, as part of this very bizarre chapter in Nebraska political history this summer, the Governor has also complimented his efforts to double down on his radical tax plan by sending out brochures and texts and a host of other campaign materials which, of course, he has a right to do from a free speech perspective. But I think people should be asking the question, where is he sending them? How much is he paying for those and why? And when asked in media reports, press conferences this summer, the Governor couldn't explain whether or not he paid for him with his own fund, campaign funds, or public funds. And that's a problem. And we see the same with the epiphany report. Now we see the same with this nominee comingling campaign resources and public funds. And that's a pattern and a practice and a problem. And it's not Partisan. I think we can all agree that no matter the person, no matter the issue, public resources should not be utilized for campaign purposes. And this is why an expansive, unchecked view of executive power that this Governor exhibits is wrong and must be called into question. Now, I am not judge, jury, and executioner in regards to those issues, I've tried to raise them professionally. Those with jurisdiction at the Accountability and Disclosure Commission have the expertise, are nonpartisan, can assess whether or not there was an issue--

KELLY: One minute.

CONRAD: --or a violation there. Thank you, Mr. President. But, nevertheless, postcards are going out promising higher teacher pay. There's nothing in the bill to do that. Postcards are going out promising smaller class sizes. There's nothing in the bills to do that. Postcards are going out saying, go look at this tax calculator

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that's posted on the Department of Revenue public resource website. Who put that together? When? What was coordinated? Why? What people were involved? Were they on the public dole? All of these questions are valid. And, again, none of this should be normalized. None of this should be normalized. And if you aren't asking questions to be good stewards of the taxpayer funds, why aren't you? Why do you think it's OK to let a Governor utilize, potentially, public resources to advance a failed political agenda to foment--

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

CONRAD: --false pressure on this body? Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Conrad. Senator Hunt, you're recognized to speak.

HUNT: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. As a member of the Government Committee and as one of the people who is present, not voting on this appointment, I also wanted to rise and explain my views about this appointment and also thank Chairman Brewer for his remarks introducing this appointment. I agree that he is a really talented tech guy. He had a very impressive resume and record of service in many different states around the country, including Florida and Colorado. I agree, he's probably a really, really smart tech guy and exactly the kind of person we want in the job. In the past in Government Committee-- but I know this is a-- it's not just a Government Committee problem or anything, every, every committee deals with this-- we've had appointments come up who have had problems like publicly sharing racist views about things that were-- like, would not even be up for discussion or interpretation, those types of things. And in the past, these people, you know, we brought up these problems, we brought the issues to light, and in many cases they removed their name from consideration after those issues were brought up. And so I, I say that to, to make the point that Senator Brewer has done a really good job running his committee and running appointments coming out of his committee. And I agree with the point he made wholeheartedly that if we cannot forgive public servants who make mistakes, we're not going to have anybody good serving in public, you know, positions in public roles that are facing our communities. It's really hard to get good people to want to work in government. Especially these jobs that are, you know, not elected, that are salaried, that are usually way below market rate in terms of what you're going to get paid. And I agree that this appointee is really good at his job, and I think that he's probably the right person for that job. But the mistake that he made under his leadership in the CIO, having one of his staffers take

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basically a campaign communication from the Governor and send that out departmentwide, this created a very serious chilling effect among staff at the CIO. And many of them reached out to me, it was whistleblowers in the department that brought this to light before this appointee brought this to light himself. And it really does create a problem when you work for a state department, you work for government, and you feel pressure from the top to, in this case, take time off work and go testify in support of the Governor's plan. That's what the email said that he sent out. You know, if you want to take time off, go, go, testify in support of LB1 for the Governor's plan. This appointee said in the hearing that the reason he sent this email is because in his department everybody was talking about this bill, everybody was talking about special session and the plan. And so he thought that if he shared some information about when the hearing was and people could go testify, that would be a good thing. I don't remember if it was Senator Conrad or me or, or someone in the committee brought up the question, well, we debate a lot of bills in the Legislature that people talk about, you know, whether that's abortion rights or immigration issues or tax issues or housing issues. We talk about a lot of things that are very controversial that do come up around the water cooler. So are you going to send out an email then about every hearing for everything that people may be talking about in your department? And he said no, he had learned his lesson and he will never send out an email again about a hearing in the Legislature. I think--

KELLY: One minute.

HUNT: --thank you, Mr. President-- I think that's probably appropriate. I think that he was clearly contrite. But to take the conversation, the focus off of this appointee and put it where it belongs, which is on the Governor and the culture that he has created in his administration, where good people like the head of the CIO are obeying in advance before they are told to do something on behalf of the Governor, like tell all their employees to go testify in support of a bill that he likes. In Timothy Snyder's book "On Tyranny," one of the things that he talks about as a move toward authoritarianism is watching for government employees who obey in advance. And that's what I warned this appointee about. I'm curious about what culture there is at the top that's causing good people like him to send out these partisan campaign emails against their better judgment. This is a problem coming from the Governor. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Hunt. Senator Day, you're recognized to speak.

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DAY: Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to yield my time to Senator Conrad.

KELLY: Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Senator Day. And I, too, want to thank the nominee for the courage and candor that he exhibited on what was no, no doubt a really challenging day when he came before our committee in regards to the communications that he sent out impermissibly comingling campaign resources with, with public resources. Everybody make mistakes. Taking responsibility, I think shows leadership. And I really, really appreciate the tone and the forthright approach that he brought to the Government Committee that day. But I do think it brings up broader questions in terms of pattern and practice. I do think it brings up broader questions in terms of culture and leadership writ large in the executive and a general view of an all powerful, expansive approach to executive power that our founders were rightly skeptical of for a host of different reasons. I also think it's really important to note, and Senator Linehan talked about this earlier in the, the last matter that was on the agenda, I would love nothing more than to have an opportunity to debate the substance of the Governor's tax plan and the details and the fiscal components. We don't have it. It's not out of committee. The Governor and his allies, including Senator Linehan, who is in a challenging spot because of the executive approach, set the timeline, the call, and the bills, which have priority. And here we are 8 days in with no bill, with no fiscal note, with no clarity as to what exemptions are in or out or what rates or what components are picked up from new bills that were put in today, or new amendments that were put in today outside of the rules. But, nevertheless, I would love to have that debate. I relish that debate. We were able to easily win that debate just a few months ago on a scaled-down version of this reverse Robin Hood scheme. But we don't have the numbers, we don't have the plan, we don't have clarity. And that's not anyone's fault, except for the Governor and his legislative allies who have facilitated this illegitimate special session. So don't forget for one second, it's not obstructionist to turn back the largest tax increase in Nebraska history and deliver a win for Nebraska businesses and Nebraska families that are sick of being nicked and dimed and are looking for thoughtful policy, which is not in LB388, and is not in any of the proposals that the Governor and his allies have put forward this session. So I'll look forward to continuing the debate on the substance of those measures as soon as we see it. We're 8 days in, we've got nothing-- we've got nothing out of committee to look at. We have no fiscal notes to analyze. So as soon as those are available,

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I'll look forward to having that debate. But I won't normalize the process. I won't stop from speaking truth to power when it comes to running up the bills on the taxpayer with no plan, no coalition, no timeline, no thoughtfulness, no dynamic collaboration. I'm not going to stop speaking truth to power when it comes to pushing dedicated public service-- servants to make needless mistakes because they feel like they have to comingle campaign resources and public resources because our state is hitting-- getting hit with a barrage of campaign resources from the Governor to advance his ideas that has limited, if any, support in the public or in the body which, again, the Governor has free speech rights and he can spend his campaign money or his personal money however he sees fit, but he has to report that--

KELLY: One minute.

CONRAD: --and he has to ensure there's no comingling with state government. If a tax calculator the Governor is putting up on the Department of Revenue site that is touted with his shiny brochures that don't reflect the bills he put forward, that is a problem. Public time and public resources cannot be utilized for campaign purposes, period. And if there was a closed firewall or some sort of accounting that kept things on the up and up, then good, we'll have A&D to sort that out. But I think that it's important that we put this in the record. All of it's been in the news already, but that's not a part of the public record. And I look forward to a great debate on the substance of the bills and the finances when we see them. We haven't seen them. I heard about a new approach to education announced just an hour ago. I'm a member of the Education Committee. No heads up. We haven't had an Executive Session. It's wrong.

KELLY: That's your time, Senator. Thank you, Senator Conrad. Senator Halloran has guests under the south balcony, Steve and Lois Huntley of Hastings. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. I, I wanted to speak to this confirmation report and some of the things that were said about the CIO's self-disclosure of impropriety as far as using government resources. He did not self-report. That is false. I received that email. I made copies of that email. I distributed copies of that email to the Revenue Committee and the Governor while he was testifying in Revenue. I then sent a copy of that email to the full Legislature and to the Accountability and Disclosure Office and passed out copies to anyone and everyone in the building that I could. That is not self-reporting. That is employees that work under him contacting

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multiple offices, talking about how they felt pressured to show up and testify and take time off. I don't know if he's qualified for the job or not. I honestly don't. But I do know that he pressured his employees, and he used political dogma to do it, to use government resources, and that shows extraordinarily poor judgment. But my bigger concern is, was he the only one? And was he also directed to do that? And we have not had the time to get the requests into all of the other state agencies to find out and to get an answer to that. I hope that people are listening to what Senator Conrad is saying today. I feel like I am on a ship that has hit the iceberg, is sinking and it is democracy. I know that people are feeling emotional. I feel emotional, I'm really frustrated to be here. We don't have to be here. We don't have to be doing this this way. We don't have to be disregarding the people of Nebraska's opinions. We don't have to disregard the institution that we all serve in at the pleasure of the people. We have a responsibility for good governance. And this special session is not it. I will vote for paying our staff, and I will vote for sine die and that is it. Because everything else is just unnecessary and wasteful and disrespectful. This Governor has disrespected this body time and time again. He has disrespected our own staff by trying to cut our budget by millions of dollars. And that is just reflective of how he approached every noncode agency. If you look at LB2, there are cuts, and those agencies found out about those cuts, same way we did when the bill was introduced. And they aren't thoughtful or, or partnered with epiphany to come up with efficiencies because they couldn't do that with noncode agencies. So instead of using this \$10 million contractor that we had, instead of doing that, what they did was just put it in the bill and say you'll figure it out. Which is essentially what they said to all of the department heads of the code agencies as well. We are on a very dangerous path for the future of Nebraska--

KELLY: One minute.

M. CAVANAUGH: --and I beg the people at home to continue to do what the Governor has told you. Contact your senators and tell them what you think. Because I have been contacted by my constituents because the Governor told them to, and they are asking me to stop this session. They do not agree with the Governor. They do not agree that we should be here, and they are terrified of what we are trying to do at the expense of everyone except for the Governor. This is immoral. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Cavanaugh. Senator Linehan, you are recognized to speak.

LINEHAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Just so people at home who are watching, I don't think our salaries-- our salaries get paid whether we're here or not. We could be home and would make \$12,000 a year. And if we're here, we make \$12,000 a year, so I don't know-- I wasn't worried about my salary not being paid. And unless somebody is keeping a big secret, we don't get more money if we're in special session. So I don't-- I don't know where that came from. I have just heard in the-- I don't know-- last 20 minutes that we had a press conference at 1:00 that, that presented a whole new approach. It did not. It was LB9, who took the levy down to 65 cents, I think, the first year, I don't have it in front of me, and then ultimately to 25 cents. The Revenue Committee looked at it and said that's a good idea. We had a hearing on that bill. Local schools came in and said we can live with local control at 25 cents. That's the way the process works here. All of a sudden it's like, oh, you had a bill and you're changing the bill. And that's exactly the way the process has worked for, I suppose, decades. That's why we have all those hearings so the public can come in. The Revenue Committee sat through-- I forget, I think I said 68, but 67 hearings. We took a lot of information in. A lot of Nebraskans have shared their thoughts. Not as many as I think should have. But there's-- I'll just call out a couple of people, Lynn Rex with the League didn't miss a single hearing she should have been at. I don't know what her total was, but it was high. Jon Cannon managed to get here for 37 hearings. 37. So it's not like we didn't listen. We did. And that's what we are pulling together. Hiding the numbers? I'm not hiding the numbers. We talked about the numbers in the Rotunda. Before we had the press conference, my office sent all the numbers of what the school funding would look like for each school to each senator. And right as the press conference started, we sent it to all the schools. So everybody in the body and all the schools, and they can get it at their school boards, can look at what we're trying to do. So if we don't want-- I'm-- I have and many of you for decades heard that the problem with property taxes is the state doesn't provide adequate funding. For decades. We come up with a very significant plan. I would say transformative. The state finally steps up to the plate and says we're going to take care of education. We're not going to pick winners and losers. We're not going to say that one school gets 60% of their budget from the state and another school gets 5%. We're saying 75% of your General Fund comes from the state. And we got people against it? And we have people against it, they know what was in LB1. There were things in there that the Revenue Committee heard hearings on, didn't like, those will not be in a bill. How much time do I have left? I hate asking that question.

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KELLY: 1 minute, 20 seconds.

LINEHAN: OK. That should be about enough time. I have worked in government and politics for 30 years. I think what Governor Pilleen has done here is amazing. It's not politically smart, that's for sure. Most people don't put ideas out that know they're going to get shot. What Governor Pilleen has done with LB1, he said, here it is, guys. Here's everything I can think of that you could do. Here's all of it. He didn't tie our hands. Somebody said, we can't do anything, our hands are tied. I-- ask any Revenue Committee member, nobody's tied their hands. He gave us everything he could think of to solve the problem, and let it to us to be the heroes. We're the ones that maybe won't tax this or maybe we'll do that. That is not a man who's thinking about himself. That's a man who's willing to take the political hits to solve a problem that we all know is serious and is a crisis. When you're making people-- retired people who own their home move out because of property taxes--

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

LINEHAN: --or you get young people who can't buy a house--

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

LINEHAN: Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Linehan. Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. Just a quick reaction, response to my friend Senator Linehan, who I deeply admire and respect. I have loved serving with her and watching her incredible history as a leader in our state and in national politics for decades. Even though we have a lot to agree on, we do find ourselves in sharp disagreement from time to time. But let me be clear about the Governor's motives here. It's not selfless, and the opposition is not accidental. And it's also not surprising. The reason there's a fierce opposition across the state and across the political spectrum to the Governor's plan, supported and facilitated by legislative leadership, is because it's bad policy. Those of us on the left say no. A sales tax based approach is inequitable. It soaks low-income working families and seniors the most. Our friends on the right say no. Tax increases and tax shifts are not what I signed up for. It doesn't result in meaningful tax relief for those who most need it. But it does put a greater burden on local families, local businesses, and those who are trying to get

ahead. They want government to make it a little bit easier to take care of their families. They don't want government to make it harder, and they certainly don't want government stealing nickels and dimes from their pockets to benefit large, wealthy landowners, which is at the heart of the Pillen and plan that has already been gutted. Senator Linehan could easily move through an amended version of LB1. There's no need to hijack LB9, which was a legitimate good faith effort. Senator Walz, myself, Senator Hughes, Senator Dorn, Senator Brandt worked on together to have an alternative, thoughtful framework in play in regards to some of these issues over a long period of time with different numbers and yet to be decided discussions emanating from the Revenue Committee about how to pay for it. Looking forward to an opportunity to get it modeled by the Department of Education. But, no, it was referenced to Revenue. No, none of those models are available. There is no need for procedural shenanigans. If you want to amend LB1, amend LB1. You don't need to hijack LB9. There's no need to do that or to try and dress it up as, well, this is what they said. Well, that's not what we signed on to no matter what you say about it, OK, that doesn't make it true. Additionally, I think it's really important to remember that we not rush and we not risk our public schools and local control, which is the heart of this special session. There's no reason to do that. We have time to take it up in the next couple months and come in arm in arm, hand in glove with the Governor, with the schools, with stakeholders when it's ready for prime time, when we gavel into regular session in just a couple of months. There's no reason to rush through today or in the next few days during this special session. That's a false narrative, and it's false pressure, and we shouldn't succumb to it or normalize it. We should have a thoughtful, deliberate process. We shouldn't be rushing through gutting and hijacking bills and not having clarity as to what the proposal is, what the costs are, what the consequences are intended or unintended.

KELLY: One minute.

CONRAD: And this whole process was carefully orchestrated by Governor Pillen and legislative leaders like Speaker Arch and Senator Linehan to set the timeline, to set the call, to set the bills that get priority, to set the agenda. So the fact that their plan has been unsuccessful and the session is chaotic is because it's a bad plan at the heart of it. It's not because of politics. It's not because of personalities. It's because it's a poorly conceived plan that failed a few months ago and will fail again this summer. So with that, I would just add one more piece that additional whistleblowers called my office after the nominee hit the paper and said that they were

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concerned because the emails went out far more broadly to other state employees instead of just confined to the OCIO's Office, which is something that I think we'll need to follow up on with A&D.

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Conrad. Senator Hansen, you're recognized to speak.

HANSEN: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. Well, so far, it sounds like I might be the only person who is happy to be here today. Maybe? I don't know, maybe not. I think it's our job. I don't care what we get paid. I know we have some people say they have events to go to. They might have occasions that they're missing, but this is what we signed up for, people. If you don't like it, stay home. But all I hear and all I see through my emails and phone calls is property taxes are ruining people in our state. Not just in my district. And let me tell you-- I, I just got to bring up a couple points here. So I know there's a lot of discussion about why some people haven't seen the plan yet, why it's being-- still in committee, why it hasn't come out of committee? Let me tell you why. It's because a lot of times, the second a bill hits the floor, it's because-- there's an obvious onslaught of obstruction that happens to a bill the second it hits the floor. So the prudent and thoughtful thing to do is make sure that you have a good bill coming out of committee that you take time on to make sure it's a good bill to discuss with other people. And some people feel like it hasn't been discussed with them. Maybe, maybe not. But there will be a lot of discussion once it gets on the floor. But you want to rush something out of committee, get on the floor, and the second it hits the floor, good luck changing anything on it unless you have a very thoughtful, meaningful committee amendment attached to it. And so I, I, I got to give props to the Revenue Committee and Senator Linehan for all the time they spent listening to these bills, which was too many. And so they spent numerous hours going over this. And to think that this is sloppy? They're not doing their job? Why a lot of people here in this room are at home watching on their TV, sitting on their couch. And a lot of people are saying this special session is unnecessary. Like, it couldn't be further from the truth. Very necessary. If any people went to the pink postcard hearings that they had in their districts, I didn't see too many people there that maybe should have been there, but I do applaud the senators who were there. I went to ones in Douglas County, Lancaster County, throughout the state. I heard people in north Omaha, I heard people in Blair. I heard

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people in rural Amer-- rural Nebraska, all saying they're getting taxed out of their homes. A lot of it has to do with valuation changes, which is I'm hoping this bill is going to address. But to say we're just going to sit here and, well, we should just go home because this is unnecessary, unnecessary, blame everything on the Governor. Which, by the way, I'm glad I'm not the Governor right now getting verbally beat over the head left and right, which is part of being a Governor. And the idea that this special session is normalizing maybe what's happening in state government in relation to a special session-- [RECORDER MALFUNCTION] What's abnormal and not normal is the property owners of this state being taxed out of their homes, people retiring out of our state. That is abnormal, not how you conduct a special session. We're here. Let's do our jobs. Wait for it to come out of committee, look it over, discuss it on the floor when it comes, and then we can figure out what we want to do. And those who are complaining about how much this special session is costing the taxpayers? The ones up there on the microphone talking about that are the ones who kept us here till 11:00 at night last year, or almost every day during session. You know how much that cost the taxpayer when we could have been here at 4 or 5:00 at-- when we were doing our jobs, instead of filibustering every bill?

KELLY: One minute.

HANSEN: You know how much that cost taxpayers? Staff were here. Clerks were here. Janitors were here. Security was here. And now, we're going to complain about how much it costs, when we're actually here to do a very specific job that 80-some % of Nebraskans say is most important to them? I'm glad I'm here. And I'll be here as long as it takes. Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Hansen. Senator Linehan, you're recognized to speak.

LINEHAN: Thank you, Mr. President. The new verbs and adverbs and adjectives I'm hearing in the last few days are a little irritating. The Revenue Committee did not hijack LB9. I appreciate all the work they did to bring LB9, introduce it, bring it to the Revenue Committee, have a hearing. But when you bring, bring a bill to Revenue Committee that you don't pay for, it's going to have to get changed before it comes to the floor. Like, you bring a bill to the committee. You say, here's our great idea, but we don't want to talk about any of the pain, any of the-- might have to-- how we pay for it. What? We're supposed to bring it to the floor, and say, here, here's a great idea, Legislature. Vote it out. We don't know how we're going to pay for it,

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but it's a good idea. So-- and, and I'm going to just keep saying the same thing over and over again. \$0.25 is what-- there must have been some broad general agreement, that's what the hearing sounded like, that if you have \$.025 Taxing authority at the local level, that was enough local control. We already have some schools, not many, but some large schools that are getting 60 or 70% of their money from the state. And we're not-- I went to one school board meeting thinking I could talk to the school board. They were one of the schools that get a lot of state aid. And I went up afterwards, and I was told by the school board member, we-- I can't talk to you. We hire people to talk to you. So I, I can't have a conversation with school board members, because they're not supposed to talk to us because they got people that are hired to talk to us. And we're the ones that aren't being honest and open and transparent? I was at a school board meeting where the hired person couldn't answer the questions. When did TEEOSA start? I think the answer was 1997. False. It started in 1990. Our press conference today was to explain to people, and this is what everybody's ignoring, if we don't adjust school funding, TEEOSA, taxes are going to keep going up. So you listening at home, if you think we're not trying to help you, that-- that's just false. If we don't fix it, your taxes are going to go up. And it hasn't been because the Legislature hasn't tried. Since I've been here, we have put \$1 billion into property tax relief. But the problem is your taxes went up \$1.3 billion. So it is, like Senator Erdman has said multiple times, it's not a decrease. It's just the decrease in the increase. So we can come here and do another decrease in the increase, or we can stand up and take on the responsibility of every kid in Nebraska that's in a public school, not just some, but every kid. One of the things I've heard-- I serve on Education Committee and Revenue. And I've heard from multiple-- the larger schools, well, we serve 70% of the kids. Well, what about the other 30? That's not like-- I don't care if it's only 5%. Why have we, for years, thought it was OK to treat a certain group of kids differently than we treat other kids? I've already caved on something, maybe. Well, we haven't kicked the bill out of committee, so maybe I won't cave on it. We have a thing in the TEEOSA formula that's called the averaging adjustment. It gives more money to big schools because their cost per student is less. They've defended it ever since I've been here. It's because-- and this-- they took this out.

KELLY: One minute.

LINEHAN: Another thing I liked about LB9. They took that away. I know we can't do that because there's-- they have too many votes in the Legislature. I'd like to take it away. It doesn't make any sense to me

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that we figure out needs, we figure out resources, and then because you got more votes than somebody else, you get more money. It's not a little amount of money. It's like \$20-some million. \$23 million. So things happen here-- we need to stop taking care of just the big guys, and take care of the kids that are in Lewiston, and Sterling, Johnson-Brock, Aurora. Those kids, maybe they only make up 30%, but they're no less important, or no lower-- they are as much of our future in this state as the kids that are in the big schools.

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

LINEHAN: Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Linehan. Senator Kauth, you're recognized to speak.

KAUTH: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. Well, first of all, we are speaking about the confirmation hearing for Dr. Matthew McCarville. I had a chance to visit with him, and his knowledge and his enthusiasm for the topic are impressive. He will be an incredible asset to our state. So I want to get that clear first, before I talk about more things. Senator Hansen, I'm very happy to be here. This is our job. This is the only reason we were elected, to serve the people of this state. And as I've been talking to people in my district going door to door, property taxes are the number one issue. The week that those postcards came out, people were livid. They opened their doors. Some were in tears. What are you going to do about it? I have asked them to send me emails that I will be reading on the floor throughout this whole process, people who have actually taken the time to say, here's how this impacts me. And they're sad. Some of them are, are really quite tragic. But we need to be paying attention to that, to the real people's voices. I also want to clear up a couple things. So we've had a lot of boy, there's a lot of drama already, isn't there? There's been some misinformation being spread. Senator Hunt earlier, made a statement that all things in the grocery store are going to be taxed. That's something that some of the lobbyists have been pushing also. And I've been getting emails from people who are like, I'm on a fixed income, please don't tax my groceries. Groceries are not being taxed. What we're talking about is pop and candy. Those are things that are wants, not needs. We were very deliberative in the Revenue Committee to say, OK, what are those things that are truly needed necessities, which is why we had a hearing on the electricity today. Especially after this week, we've all realized how important electricity is. OPPD has done a magnificent job of getting the power back on in Omaha, but I didn't even realize that we taxed that, as a state. We don't need

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to. We shouldn't be. That hurts the lowest income. There's so much let's wait until next year. Let's think about it. Let's do a, a hearing. Let's do something to just keep postponing, and postponing, and postponing. Stalling an important issue is not ethical. Using procedural shenanigans to waste time is not ethical. And I'm referring to the fact that this bill was originally misdirected to the wrong committee. That wasted a full day. So when we have people complaining about how long this is taking or how it's impacting your schedules, understand that there are shenanigans being played to make sure that this doesn't get heard. And I think that's wrong. We were sent here to do a job, and that is to protect our constituents' interests. Complaining about property taxes and promising to work on them is the oldest political ploy in the book, but actually working on it takes real commitment and it takes real guts. And I do agree with Senator Linehan. Governor Pillen, he, he has really been taking it on the chin. This is a huge, huge, huge deal. This is a huge amount of things to ask. There's a lot of information. I'm really glad we're actually doing this in the special session. I can't imagine trying to process all of this at the same time we process our other 900 bills. There's a lot of drama words, a lot of emotion being played. Don't rush. Chaotic. This place moves at different speeds. And quite frankly, sometimes it is very chaotic in every session. We are changing things constantly. That's part of the legislative process. There are lots of other emotional driven words, like Robin Hood.

KELLY: One minute.

KAUTH: Thank you, Mr. President-- personal attacks that are happening on the Governor, the word illegitimate. And I do find it really ironic hearing some senators yelling on the mic about being yelled at about this issue, when they are some of the most prolific yellers on the mic. So it's, it's-- we're getting a lot of stuff. I am going to read you a very quick note from one of my people. And, and if I don't get to it now, I'll get to it later. I'm writing to share my perspective on taxes for your consideration. The main takeaway: my family won't be in Nebraska long due to taxes. We're from the southeast and moved to Nebraska 2 1/2 years ago in a job relocation. I found that most native to Nebraska are unaware, truly, how bad they have it from a property and income tax perspective. The issue's compounded if you live within the city limits of Omaha, due to the significant overtaxation of vehicle registration.

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

KAUTH: Thank you, Mr. President.

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KELLY: Thank you, Senator Kauth. Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. And good afternoon, colleagues. Just to clarify for the record, I have joy in my heart every time I have the honor and opportunity to walk into this august institution. And it is always a pleasure to be here and to serve my district and my beloved Nebraska. What I don't have is the same gleeful, enthusiastic approach to increasing taxes on working families that Senator Hansen and Senator Kauth exhibit. I don't have the same enthusiastic and gleeful approach to literally throwing a wrench into the leaders in our local economy, the ag industries, and the manufacturing industries. I don't have a gleeful and enthusiastic response to risking our great public schools, which are consistently performing in the top 10 in the country. I don't have a gleeful, enthusiastic approach to making our tax code more regressive, which hurts low-income working families and seniors the most. I don't have a gleeful and enthusiastic approach, like Senator Hansen and Senator Kauth, to not only seeking to benefit the largest, wealthiest landowners paid for by regressivity in our tax code, but additionally, by, by budget cuts that disproportionately impact low-income working Nebraskans. So your pay-fors that you've put forward, whether it was last year or this year, are the same. Nothing has changed. You're trying to utilize a regressive approach to give some wealthy landowners a larger property tax relief on the backs of the poor, on the backs of the economic drivers in our local economies. Those are poor political choices. And even though I am honored to serve and will never complain or whine about that, I don't have a gleeful approach to that, because it's risky and wrong and unnecessary at this point in time. And it's poor policy, no matter when it comes forward. So let's be clear about that. Unlike my friend Senator Hansen and Senator Kauth, I don't have a gleeful, enthusiastic approach to risking our roads and infrastructure. That could happen as a part of this plan. I have taken hard votes over the entirety of my career to provide thoughtful property tax relief to Nebraskans, and to inject more resources into our public schools, to keep our public schools strong and reduce the pressure on local property taxes. And I will continue to do so. And I will continue to work in a gleeful, enthusiastic way with anybody at any time to accomplish those goals. But I will be unafraid to be clear, to be vocal, to be strong, to support working families in my district and across the state. Senator Kauth, Senator Hansen, what is your response? What is your thinking when we have a shocking statistic: Nebraska is number one in the country for adults who work full time year round and live in poverty. Why are you seeking

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to burden them more so with more sales taxes that aren't a choice? Fixing your brakes, that's not a choice. Renovating your home, that's not a choice. But you know what is a choice? Buying a bunch of land; that's actually a choice. And there's no targeting in regards to the Governor's plan that you're supporting and pushing through this body to really help those who most need it, that I would actually gleefully and enthusiastic work with you, to help keep grandma in her home, to help a young family buy a house. But that's not at the heart of your plan, and you know it.

KELLY: One minute.

CONRAD: So, I look forward to debate every time I have a chance to enter these hallowed halls. And I look forward to being a strong voice for those who can't hire a bunch of lobbyists and are counting on us, the voice of the people, to be a strong voice for working people against proposals that gut their schools, gut their community services, and then ask them to pay more, particularly the renters who see little to no relief, and over 40% of Nebraskans that won't be benefited by this plan. So you can dress it up however you want. You can throw around whatever rhetoric you want. That's at your heart of your plan. Nothing has changed. You engineered this process this summer. You weren't prepared, because you can't sell your ideas because they're bad policies. I can take the sharp elbows from your insinc-- from your insults.

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

CONRAD: No problem. But I'm not going to stop fighting for Nebraskans. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator. And that was your third time on the committee. Senator Blood, you're recognized to speak.

BLOOD: Thank you, Mr. President. Fellow senators, friends all, I actually stand opposed to this confirmation report-- to this appointment. I appreciate how kind Senator Brewer was in describing the applicant. I, unfortunately, was in the hearing room during that time. And I think for somebody that is so intelligent and so qualified, the mistake that he made was pretty darn big, and that would not be something that I would expect from somebody that was so intelligent and so qualified. It seemed like a really-- a very freshman type of mistake to make. So I will not be voting in favor of that. With that said, I had not planned on speaking until Senator Hansen spoke. And I want to say, Senator Hansen, first of all, I am

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here because I am here for District 3 and for Nebraskans. And I didn't really hear maybe, but one person kind of complain about being here, because it's hard when you juggle families, and you're trying to juggle something that was really a surprise session. And you never really knew about it until the night before if it was actually going to be a session. And then it seems really unorganized. And maybe that's just our perception, but perception is indeed reality. But, you know, Senator Hansen, I remember when you wanted to call a special session during the pandemic, to eliminate people having to wear masks in certain situations. And during that same window of time, you were going to be climbing a mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro. So, you know, yeah, there's a lot of theater that happens in our Legislature. And you've been a part of it before, as well. But what I find a little offensive is when you talk to people who differ from your opinion, and to basically calling them crybabies. I don't think it makes somebody a crybaby when they talk about how they feel and why they feel that way, and what they're saying when it comes to the voices of the people that they represent. Absolutely all of us have heard how hard it is, especially for our seniors and our disabled veterans, with property taxes. And so many of us, myself included, we came with good intentions. I busted my butt for 2 weeks-- was it 2 weeks that we even had-- for a very short window of time, to put bills together to take in front of Revenue. And Revenue is not one of my favorite committees to be in front of, because sometimes they don't seem very happy. But they were very kind this time. And I feel, based on what the Speaker has said, that it doesn't really matter what we brought forward, that the only thing that we're here for is for the Governor's bill. Now, I'm hearing some things from Senator Linehan that makes me have a little bit of hope, but that's my problem. I always have hope. I always have hope that we can come together and do better. And gosh darn it, I can't even tell you how many times you've proved me wrong. But come on. If we're here, let's be here for the right reason. You know, we talked about people not claiming their credits. Some of you might remember that I had a bill that gave them the credits automatically. And there were 2 senators that made fun of me on this floor, and said, you're saying that Nebraskans are too stupid to know how to get these credits. Now, I'm not going to throw them under the bus. It's in the transcripts. But there's been a lot of efforts by us to lower property taxes. For almost 30 years, they've been trying to stop unfunded mandates. We know that approximately 22% of most counties' budgets are paying those unfunded mandates. We've known about this for decades. We let it get out of hand, and we still refuse to address it. We can't keep playing shell games with taxes. Over the last 8 years, mostly what we've done is to cut, cut, cut. When are we

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going to save, save, save? When we did have money, we were an ATM in this last session.

ARCH: One minute.

BLOOD: And Senator Hansen, I have been here when my husband has been in the hospital having amputations. I was here the day after I got out of the hospital this year. When somebody questions my motives when I'm here, I kind of want to throw my shoes at him. Many of us are here because we are dedicated, come rain, si-- rain or shine or sickness. Because we want to do the people's will. So choose your words more wisely, because many of us are here because we want to do the right things. And you might not like how we express that, but it is what it is. Thank you, Mr. President.

ARCH: Senator Linehan, you are recognized to speak, and this is your third opportunity.

LINEHAN: Thank you, Mr. President. There's a number that was in an op ed that was coauthored by members of the Legislature, I think, in the World-Herald, maybe. I don't-- I think it was in the World-Herald last week, which claimed that 40% of Nebraskans live in rental properties. I, I don't know where that number came from. I don't think that's accurate. But I would like-- when we're going to bring numbers to the floor of the Legislature and we're going to debate bills, I would like something to back those numbers up. I've talked to some members here that are getting-- they feel like there's a lot of opposition to this bill. I've looked at emails that are coming in in opposition. That's generated opposition, guys. There aren't a whole hundreds of Nebraskans out there that don't think property taxes are a problem. There just aren't. I-- I've always been skeptical of polling. I want to know-- just want to know who's doing it. Do they know what they're doing? Who did they call? Is it balanced? Is it really reflect Nebraska? When I hear there's a polling that says 80% of Nebraskans want property tax relief, 80%, I don't have any doubt that's true. Because all the time I've ever worked politics, if a poll matched what I heard in the coffee shop, I thought the poll was very accurate. So when somebody bring me a poll that said-- if somebody brought me a poll today that said only 25% of Nebraskans-- only rich, big landowners care about property taxes, I would know that's not true. I live in Elkhorn. A lot of the people in my neighborhood built their homes. They were built in the '90s. They can't, they can't stay there, guys. And they're, they're-- yes. They are upper-middle class. There's no doubt. But they're not rich. They're not huge landowners. All across Elkhorn and Waterloo, I have people who built their houses 50

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years ago. It's paid for, and they can't stay in them. We have young people-- 30% of your mortgage now, in many places, is property taxes and insurance. 30%. You can't buy-- you, you can save money, you can have a-- you can have enough for a down payment, enough for the mortgage payment, but you can't cover the insurance and the property taxes. I don't, I don't know if that-- I don't know what a crisis is if that's not a crisis. The other number that keeps getting thrown out just-- this is really bad for low income. Show me how. How is it really bad? OpenSky's number, when they come in and say, if you make less than \$30,000, you're going to pay 5.5% more in taxes? No, you're not. We don't tax rent. We don't tax groceries. We don't tax sales tax on gas. How much does somebody who's making \$30,000 a year have left over to buy things? Not very much. And besides, the things that they have to buy-- clothing, cleaning supplies, they're already taxed, guys. We're already paying tax on that stuff. They're, they're fighting the original LB888 [SIC]. That increased sales tax. What we're here to bring to the floor does not increase sales taxes. If they were serious about worrying about low-income people, they'd be talking about the EITC, earned income tax credit. They'd be thrilled that we're talking about taking sales tax off electricity. And they would hope that some low, moderate-income people might be able to buy a house. Tax-- 8 years I've been here, years before, taxes always come down to it helps the rich more.

KELLY: One minute.

LINEHAN: Yes, tax cuts do usually help the rich more. Those that pay more get more money back. But in Nebraska, you take-- and other groups like to talk about the effective tax rate. Well, you take a retired couple making \$80,000 a year, and you say they're paying 3 or 4 or \$5,000 on their house. And they're paying taxes, income taxes, which we start-- I think the highest rate in Nebraska is \$38,000, we're not talking about rich people. We're talking about people that have to figure out their-- people go into the grocery store. And I am going to go to Aldi's, and I'm going to look at the weekend ads. Because every time I go to the grocery store, I can't believe how much it's costing families to eat. And we're not talking about T-bone steak. We're talking about just everything in the grocery store. Package of bacon, package of--

KELLY: That's your time, Senator.

LINEHAN: Thank you.

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KELLY: Thank you, Senator Linehan. Senator Jacobson, you're recognized to speak.

JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Well, I didn't really intend to speak today. Because after all, the last I checked, we're talking about gubernatorial appointments. But yet, we've jumped the gun. And we're talking about a bill that no one really knows exactly what's in it. So they're going to talk about things that are in it which really aren't in it, OK, because it fits the narrative of a bunch of hyperbole to get everybody jazzed up about how horrible this is going to be. And I would just encourage a couple of things. If people are truly concerned about the cost of the special session, here's a thought. How about we speed up and we get these gubernatorial appointments done, or at least stick to the discussion about the gubernatorial appointments. If there's a concern, let's hear it. But what I've heard on this appointment is we have a person who made a mistake, made it right, and like anybody that touches the hot stove, you're probably not going to do it a second time. So let's get on with it. Let's pass this appointment. Let's pass the rest of the appointments. If you've got legitimate concerns about the appointment, say so. But let's get through the day. Let's move on. Let's go to the main event. And let's don't speculate about what's in the bill. Why don't we get the bill out here and talk about the specifics in the bill. This idea that you're going to be paying for car repairs, my understanding, that's not in the bill. But I guess we can talk about it and jazz everybody up and get them all concerned. I'm getting emails from people-- oh, my gosh, we're hearing all these things. I want to make one statement to everybody listening. Don't listen to anything else you hear today. Don't listen to a thing you hear today. Until we have that bill in front of us, everything you're hearing is hyperbole. Just ignore it. Just ignore it. You'll have an opportunity-- everybody will have an opportunity to speak on the bill. But it's not today. We don't have a bill in front of us today. We're doing gubernatorial appointments today. So let's think about that as we move forward. So to my constituents-- Julie and I were doing the parade circuit this last weekend. What did I hear from my constituents? My property taxes are too high. Thank you for all your efforts to lower our property taxes. And that's what we intend to do. Everybody can talk about I'm going to bring you a homestead exemption without a pay-for, or I'm going to bring this without a pay-for, but, you know what? Guess what? There's not a money tree down here. Everything needs a pay-for. Senator Linehan is exactly right. We brought L-- they brought LB9 to the Revenue Committee. They had to figure out the pay-for. The pay-for is coming out of LB1. I want to

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thank the Governor for having the courage to bring forward this special session and his ideas. I want to thank him for bringing a working group together of a, of a cross-section of, of senators in the body to help bring some ideas forward. And I certainly want to thank everyone on the Revenue Committee for their hard work this last week, in particular, to work through all of those bills. And with that, I'm going to yield the remainder of my time to Senator Hansen.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Jacobsen. Senator Hansen, you have 1 minute, 50 seconds.

HANSEN: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. After what Senator Jacobson said, I'm going to be brief now and not get into too much. Because A, I have to watch out for flying shoes, and B, I'd rather get to the substance of the bill that's going to be coming out of committee. And so I'm not going to continue too much more with debate on the bill, or maybe what-- some other concerns that senators have brought up. So I'm going to yield the rest of my time. Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Hansen. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Brewer, you are recognized to close on the committee report.

BREWER: Thank you, Mr. President. Well, probably the most interesting one of these I've done. So I guess if this is my last one, that's the destiny on this. I think that everyone here has probably made up their mind how they're going to vote on this. We went over it enough, and a whole lot of other things that were not part of this report. But I'm going to take a little bit of a diversion here. For those that don't know, today is Purple Heart Day. I don't say that because I have one. I say that because those of us who do have one, wear them for those that didn't come home. And yesterday was kind of a special day, if you're a Nebraskan and, and you are familiar with what's called Extortion 17. Extortion 17 was a helicopter mission in Afghanistan on the sixth day of August of 2011. It was a special operations mission that was going into a place called the Tangi Valley. It's in the Wardak province, just south of Kabul. At that time, I was assigned to the Special Operations Task Force doing the counter-narcotics mission over there. My LA at that time, Tony-- my LA now-- was then in Kabul working at ISAF headquarters. And the mission that we were doing was about 5 kilometers from where Extortion 17 ended up. It departed Bagram Air Base to be a quick reaction force for the 75th Ranger Battalion. It was at night. They were going [INAUDIBLE], nap of the earth, on the deck. As they went through a valley, a RPG gunner fired a rocket-propelled grenade and hit the transmission, and it crashed,

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and all 36 on board were killed. One of those on board was a Nebraskan, a Staff Sergeant Patrick Hamburger, from Grand Island. He was a crew chief, and had volunteered to go that night. He'd worked all day. They were shorthanded, so he volunteered to go that night. And he, he was lost in the mission. And we received the word they needed help at the location, because there wasn't any other forces available. And obviously, if a CH-47 helicopter, which, if you don't know, that's the big double-propellered ones, when they crash, it's a significant event. And so, not necessarily a great thing to do on your birthday, having to pick up the pieces. And then, we had to notify family, and all the things that came with that. So to kind of get folks back to reality on this Purple Heart Day, I would say, always remember Staff Sergeant Patrick Hamburger, a Nebraskan that gave his life. And with that, I will close my report. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Brewer. Members, the question is the adoption and confirmation of the Government Committee report. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Has everyone voted who wishes to vote? Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 36 ayes, 0 nays on the adoption of the committee report.

KELLY: The committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, the Natural Resources Committee would report favorably on numerous gubernatorial appointments to the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission.

KELLY: Senator Bostelman, you're recognized to open.

BOSTELMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. The Nebraska Natural Resource Commission is a-- is comprised of 27 members. 13 are elected by the Natural Resource District caucuses and 14 are appointed by the Governor. The Natural Resource Commission oversees 7 grant programs of the Water Sustainability Fund, which is a source of financial support to help local project sponsors achieve the goals set out in Nebraska Statute Section 2-1506. The Natural Resource Commission oversees water sustainability fund operations, including applications reviews, scoring and ranking, and awarding funding to successful applicants. Once the Natural Resource Commission grants funding to a project, the Department of Natural Resources enters into a contract with the project sponsor, receives and reviews reimbursement requests, disperses funds, and monitors the project progress. The Natural Resource Committee held a confirmation hearing on July 31, 2024, in consideration of gubernatorial appointee Stanley Clouse. Mr. Clouse is

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a reappointment to the Natural Resource Commission, to serve a term from June 1, '24, to May 31 of '28. He is the municipal representative of the-- on the commission. Mr. Clouse is from Kearney, and is a retired account manager for Nebraska Public Power District. He has also served as chair of the Governor's Task Force on Human Trafficking. He has also been involved in Leadership Kearney, Rotary International, Nebraska Diplomat, and numerous other civic groups. He appeared in person at the hearing, and the committee voted 8-0 to advance his confirmation. Next, on July 30, the, the committee met to consider a "gubernatorial" appointment, Rick Kubat. Mr. Kubat is a reappointment to the Natural Resource Commission, to serve a term from June 1, '24, to May 31, '28. He serves as the Metropolitan Utility District representative on the commission. Mr. Kubat is an attorney from Omaha who has previously served on the Lower Platte River Consortium Board and the Nebraska Water Resources Association Board. He earned his bachelor's degree in political science from Miami University, and has a law degree from the University of Nebraska College of Law. He appeared in person at the hearing, and the committee voted 8-0 to advance his confirmation. Next, on July 30, the committee considered a "gubernatorial" appointment of Kennon Meyer. Ms. Meyer is a new appointment to the Natural Resources Commission, to serve a term from June 1, 2024, until May 31 of '28. She will represent municipal users from a primary class city on the commission. Ms. Meyer is an attorney from Lincoln. She received her bachelor's degree in agriculture from DePaul University in Chicago, and her law degree from the University of Nebraska College of Law. She appeared in person at the hearing and committee voted 8-0 to advance her confirmation. Next, on July 30, we considered a gubernatorial appointment of John Shadle. Mr. Shadle is a reappointment to the Natural Resources Commission, to serve a term from June 1, '24, to May 31, '28. He is a public power district representative on the commission. Mr. Shadle works for the Nebraska Public Power District as a water resources super-- supervisor. He is from Columbus. He attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and also earned his master's degree there. He is a Lower Platte-- Lower Loup Natural Resource District Board member, as well as the city of Columbus Parks Board member. He appeared in person at the hearing, and the committee voted 8-0 to advance his confirmation. Last, on July 31, the committee considered a gubernatorial appointment of Mr. Scott Smathers. Mr. Smathers is a reappointment to the Natural Resources Commission, to serve a term from June 1, '24, to May 31 of '28. He is the outdoor recreation user representative on the commission. Mr. Smathers is from Lincoln and works as a customer service manager for Consolidated Com-- Companies. He has been on the Natural Resources Commission since it was founded

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in 2014, and has served as many positions on the commission. He has also served on the Nebraska Wildlife Crime Stoppers and the Big Game Conservation Association Board, and the Nebraska Sportsmen's Foundation Board, and the Water Funding Task Force. He appeared in person at the hearing, and committee voted 8-0 to advance his confirmation. The committee voted all of those members 8-0, and would ask your green vote for the confirmations on those Natural Resource Commission members.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Bostelman. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized-- and waive closing. Members, the question is the adoption of the committee report from the Natural Resources Committee. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 41 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee report, Mr. President.

KELLY: That committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk, next item on the agenda.

CLERK: Mr. President, the Natural Resources Committee would report favorably on the gubernatorial appointment of Kent J. McNeill to the Game and Parks Commission.

KELLY: Senator Bostelman, you're recognized to open.

BOSTELMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. The Natural Resource Committee held a confirmation hearing on July 31, 2024, to consider a gubernatorial appointee, Kent McNeill. Mr. McNeill is a new appointee-- appointment to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, to serve a term from July 16, '24, until January 15, '28, as the District 1 representative. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is comprised of a 9-member board. Eight of the commissioners serve districts across the state. The ninth serves at-large. Commissioners serve as a volunteer capacity. The mission of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is the stewardship of the state's fish, wildlife, park, and outdoor recreation resources, and the best long-term interests of the people in those resources. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is funded primarily by the sale of hunting and fishing licenses, as well as through the sale of park permits and goods and services at state parks and recreation areas. Mr. McNeill lives in Papillion and is employed by-- as the CEO of the International Mountain Biking Association. He earned his bachelor of science degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He also served on trails to have

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our-- served on Trails Have our Respect Board, and the Outdoor Alliance Board. I would say the hearing on Mr. McNeill was, was robust and was good. I think the committee really appreciated what Mr. McNeill brings to the commission. And we overwhelmingly support, support his appointment with an 8-0 vote, and advanced for the confirmation.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Bostelman. Senator Erdman, you're recognized to speak.

ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. And good afternoon. I would assume that most of you in the room would be disappointed if I didn't speak about something about Game and Parks. So the current statute says that 3 of the Game and Parks Commission need to be involved in agriculture. When we appoint people to Game and Parks that don't understand the damages and the issues caused by wildlife and the overabundance of them in rural Nebraska, and we put more people on from Omaha that are CEOs of some corporation, have never understood which end of the cow gets up first, don't make the same kind of decisions of those who deal with those issues on a daily basis, of wildlife damages. So Senator Bostelman correctly stated it was a great hearing, and the person is well-qualified. But going forward, someone coming back next year need to change the statute requirement that says every commissioner, every commissioner needs to have a requirement in their qualification to be an agricultural producer. We would have a different Game and Parks. We would have a Game and Parks that actually cares about the western part of the state perhaps, and would actually have-- maybe we could have a Game and Parks that understands how many animals they actually have. It's hard to manage something if you don't know how many you have. And so, I'm going to vote for this confirmation. But I'm just telling you right now that going forward, the commission has to change, the makeup of that commission has to change, because we've been doing this for years and years and years. And nothing changes because the rural people-- the agricultural people on the committee don't have much of a voice when there's only 3 of them. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Erdman. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Bostelman, you're recognized to close.

BOSTELMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Senator Erdman, for your, for your comments. Mr. McNeill did-- was raised in North Platte, Nebraska. He is from rural Nebraska. He does have that background for him. He did spend a lot of his youth and growing up in the out-of-doors, doing many of the things that, that we do enjoy in this state. One thing that I think everybody should-- and I talked to

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Senator Erdman the other day about this, too. He kind of is a breath of fresh air in a sense. He's bringing in some different concepts and different ideas on revenue generators and things to bring into Game and Parks, different things we can do in different areas of the parks, which I think that-- as well as on the wildlife management, I understand that. But these are all things that tie together with what he brings in, that's different than anyone else that we have sitting as a commissioner now. And I think that's an important part to have with that, too. He's got a lot of experience outside of this state, working in parks and those type of things. So I think that's good. So, one last thing I'm going to say outside of this. I did get a text from my wife. Today is National Professional Engineer's Day. My wife is a professional engineer. She wanted to make sure she thanked all of those who gets their PE licenses. It is a very important thing that you do. But thank you for all the professional engineers in the state of Nebraska. I ask for your green vote in confirmation on Mr. McNeill. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Bostelman. Members the question is the adoption of the committee report from the Natural Resources Committee. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 41 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee report, Mr. President.

KELLY: The committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, the Agriculture Committee would report favorably on the gubernatorial appointment of Toms S-- Tom S. Dinsdale to the State Fair Board.

KELLY: Senator Halloran, you're recognized to open.

HALLORAN: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. Good afternoon, colleagues. The Agriculture Committee recommends confirmation of the reappointment of Tom Dinsdale to the Nebraska State Fair Board. Mr. Dinsdale has completed one term on the Fair Board and is eligible to serve this in one additional 3-year term. Mr. Dinsdale is the owner of Dinsdale Automotive vehicle dealership in Grand Island. His past occupations include being an owner of a small trucking company and as a partner of a family livestock operation. Previous state appointments include serving as a member of the Vehicle Industry Licensing Board. He has also served on the boards of Fonner Park and the Stuhr Museum, and in 2020 was named to serve on the Nebraska Greats Foundation

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Board. Recognitions and honors include the Grand Island Independent Man of the Year in 2010, National Society of Fundraising Executive Philanthropist of the Year, and the United Way Citizen of the Year. He's a graduate of Palmer High School, earned an associate degree at Went-- Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington, Missouri, and attended the University of Nebraska. Even prior to Mr. Dinsdale being first appointed, he was already heavily invested in the fair as a former member of the 1868 State Fair Foundation, and as a co-sponsor or a sponsor of the Beef Barn facility on the Fonner Park campus. Mr. Dinsdale appeared before the committee on August 1, via teleconference, and responded to the committee's questions. His qualifications to represent the Grand Island business community and his support for the investment in the fair was very apparent. The committee voted 7 ayes and no dissenting votes to recommend confirmation of Mr. Dinsdale's appointment. I move adoption of the Ag Committee report.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Halloran. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close. And waive closing. Members. The question is the adoption of the committee report from the Agricultural Committee. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 40 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee report, Mr. President.

KELLY: The committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk, for the next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, the Business and Labor Committee would report favorably on the gubernatorial appointment of Joel Carson-- Carlson to the Commission of Industrial Relations.

KELLY: Senator Riepe, you're recognized to open.

RIEPE: Thank you, Mr. President. Joel Carlson comes to us from Norfolk, Nebraska. He's the business-- and the Business and Labor Committee held a hearing on July 31 for the reappointment of Mr. Carlson to the Commission of Industrial Relations. The commission is composed of 5 appointed commissioners who are tasked with resolving public sector labor controversies, with jurisdiction over state and local government employees. The committee went into Executive Session immediately thereafter, and advanced Mr. Carlson's appointment. Mr. Carlson has previously served on the commission twice, before being appointed by Governor Heineman in 2013, and reappointed by Governor Ricketts in 2018. He is an attorney in Norfolk, currently a volunteer

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for the Norfolk Zone Afterschool Program, and is one of the most experienced commissioners on the Commission of In-- Industrial Relations at this time. With that, I would like to thank all of the members of the Business and Labor Committee and the staff that serve on that committee. With that, I ask for your support to reconfirm Mr. Carlson. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Riepe. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close. And waive closing. Members the question is the adoption of the committee report from Business and Labor. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 40 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee report, Mr. President.

KELLY: The committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, the General Affairs Committee would report favorably on the gubernatorial appointment of Janell Beveridge to the State Racing and Gaming Commission.

KELLY: Senator Lowe, you're recognized to open.

LOWE: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. Good afternoon, colleagues. And for your pleasure today, I present the General Affairs Committee has one appointment for your consideration. Janell Beveridge has been reappointed to the State Racing and Gaming Commission. The committee voted to confirm her with 6 yes votes and 2 absent votes. Janelle is from Paxton, and, and was a bank president for 20 years. She has served on the commission for 28 years and was initially appointed by Ben Nelson. She has a great deal of experience on the commission and has served as vice chair. She is very supportive of the horse racing industry, and represents western Nebraska well. Please vote green and-- to confirm her reappointment. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Lowe. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close. And waive closing. Members the question is the adoption of the General Affairs Committee report. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 41 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee report, Mr. President.

KELLY: The committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk, next item.

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CLERK: Mr. President, next item. The Transportation and Telecommunications Committee would report favorably on the gubernatorial appointment of 2 individuals to the Nebraska Information Technology Commission.

KELLY: Senator Moser, you're recognized to open.

MOSER: Thank you, Mr. President. The Transportation and Telecommunications Committee held a confirmation hearing on Wednesday, July 31, for 2 appointments to the Nebraska Information Technology Commission, whose mission is to make Nebraska's information technology infrastructure more accessible and responsive to the needs of its citizens while making investments in government, education, healthcare, and other services more efficient and cost effective. The NITC is a 10-member, Governor-appointed commission. The members are to be approved by the Legislature. One member represents elementary and secondary education, one represents post-secondary education, one represents communities, and 5 represent the general public, joined by a nonvoting member of the Legislature and a representative of the Governor. Members serve 4-year terms and are limited to 2 consecutive terms. There are 2 appointees, Phillip Doerr and Nathan Watson, both representing the general public and whose terms will end April 2, 2028. Mr. Doerr is the owner of Doerr Farms and has served as league manager for the Bloomfield Youth Baseball program and as an assistant Knox County 4-H archery volunteer and coordinator. Mr. Watson is president of Contemporary Analysis, and he's the founder and dean of the Omaha Data Science Academy and a graduate of Northwest Missouri State University. The Transportation and Telecommunications Committee recommends confirmation of these nominations 6-0, and 2 members absent. We'd appreciate your support. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Moser. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close. And waive closing. Members, the question is the adoption of the report from the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. All those in favor of vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 39 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee report, Mr. President.

KELLY: The committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, some items. Motion to be printed from Senator John Cavanaugh to LB4. Notice that the General Affairs Committee will have an Executive Session under the south balcony at 2:15 on August 8.

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August 8, 2:15 under the south balcony. Additionally, pair of name adds from Senator Dungan to LB70, and Senator Erdman, named added to LB54. Notice that the Revenue Committee will meet in Executive Session on Thursday, August 8 at 8:00 a.m. in room 1524. Revenue, Exec Session, Thursday, August 8, 8:00, room 1524. Additionally, the Revenue Committee will hold a briefing on Thursday, August 8 at 10:00 a.m. in room 1524. Revenue Committee, briefing, Thursday, August 8, 10:00 a.m. in room 1524.

KELLY: Senator Linehan, you're recognized for an announcement.

LINEHAN: Thank you, Mr. President. So, just make sure everybody heard. The Exec Committee will Exec-- Revenue Executive Committee, tomorrow morning, 8 a.m.. We will do a briefing for senators at 10 a.m. in the same room. Yes. Thank you, Clerk-- in the same room. So 10 a.m. tomorrow morning, in 1524. So have a nice evening. Thanks for getting us out of here before 5.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Linehan. Mr. Speaker. Oh. Excuse me, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. Finally, a priority motion. Senator DeKay would move to adjourn the body until Thursday, August 8, 2024 at 2 p.m. Thursday, tomorrow, August 8, at 2:00 p.m.

KELLY: Members, you've heard the motion to adjourn. All those in favor say aye. Those opposed, nay. The Legislature is adjourned.