

that issue very well in terms of the impact of a mandatory system, and the trade-off that you take when you do that. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Kristensen. Senator Pirsch, you're next, followed by Senators Schellpeper, Wickersham, Withem, Robinson, Wehrbein, Coordsen, Vrtiska and Schmitt. Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Madam President and members of the body. I did choose LB 421 as my priority bill because I think this is an issue and certainly a...an opportunity for the State of Nebraska to start with practicing safe practices, and to have everyone know, or have an opportunity for one place to know where those kind of underground pipes and electrical cables, telephone cables are located. The safety factor has been talked to, but I want to tell you that Nebraska is a vital crossroads not only of highways with our interstate going across and the electrical high power marching across our hills and prairies, but underground we are the crossroads for many, many cross country utilities, pipelines, long-distance lines, electric lines. These are the kind of things that LB 421 would speak to. We need to know where those are; the safety of not only the contractor who is digging, but also for the surrounding areas. I wanted to speak to the Withem amendment specifically. I have some information regarding South Dakota, and South Dakota was contemplating the change for a mandatory one-call. And South Dakota law currently requires the operator placing utility or other underground lines or fixtures to record the location of those lines on the file card system kept at the county Register of Deeds Office. That would be the alternative if we did not make it mandatory and I know the Register of Deeds have complained, I know that Senator Dierks has an amendment to take them out. In South Dakota, it required someone to go to the county Register of Deeds and search that card system to find out whether there is a buried facility in the area. And also under the current law excavators are liable for damages caused if they hit a recorded underground facility. So South Dakota is looking at a bill that sets up a state one-call notification board and that board would be financed solely by the revenues from the state one-call notification center, as LB 421 is considering. Senator Kristensen talked about Iowa, our neighbor to the east, being mandatory. I'd like to read to you a few others that have mandatory membership. Arizona and Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana and Washington. Now many of these states have a lot of