

May 3, 1993

LB 717

ASSISTANT CLERK: Madam President, Senator Witek would move to indefinitely postpone LB 717.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Witek. Senator Chambers, do you want to take it up? Okay. Senator Witek.

SENATOR WITEK: Madam President, members of the body, I've asked to kill 717. I don't believe a case has been made. Safety for all citizens is an excellent objection, but this bill will not accomplish it. Who has more concern for the safety than individuals...for the safety of a city than the individuals who dedicate their lives to law enforcement. These people are not just union members, they are also citizens of Omaha, with families, who live in all different parts of our city. I would doubt that any one of you have received a letter from any of them asking for this piece of legislation. The only people who have asked for this piece of legislation that I can see from anything I've received was...were the Police Chiefs Association with President Jim Skinner. I believe that...that we already have a very equitable distribution of officers in the City of Omaha. I believe that the collectively bargained agreement is...is very concerned with safety, is very equitable, gives all citizens in the city, in the entire City of Omaha good distribution of their police officers. I do not agree with...with Senator Chambers' assumptions or many of his statements on the floor here. I have all of the information that I have been given by members of the police force in Omaha, I've talked to many of them personally, I've asked for their collective bargained agreements. They look very equitable, they are very equitable. I can show you that...that the senior officers are distributed at a rate of 50 percent in each area. The reason that some of the percentages are lower in the northeast area is not because they have less senior officers, it's because they have more new officers in that area. And if we're talking about seniority, I would also like Senator Chambers to define seniority for me. Is that an officer with more than two years experience, more than four years experience? How many years experience are you requiring now that you will try to get those officers in your area? How many years experience will you...will you want of those officers in your area? And will you let two women patrol together? I mean these are questions that I'm getting from the rank and file. You know, if we go ahead and allow us to break into their collectively bargained agreement, we can go through the whole