

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Chambers, would you bring us up-to-date on the bill?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes, Madam President, because there are some amendments, I will be very brief in bringing the body up-to-date on this bill because we've discussed it before. It is a bill which, if enacted, would restore to the chief of police in metropolitan cities, the way the bill is drafted right now, the power to assign officers wherever they are needed in disregard of any contractual restriction. The problem in Omaha is that the vast majority of rookie officers are assigned to one area of the city. The chief has written a letter stating that this restriction prevents him from ensuring that there is equal law enforcement protection throughout the city. The purpose of this bill is to restore to the chief the power to assign these officers where they are needed and the matching of officers who are needed to the place where they will be assigned will be determined partly by the amount of experience they have, the skills they possess and other factors that are legitimate management considerations. I'm asking that this bill be advanced.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Amendment, Mr. Clerk?

CLERK: Senator Chambers would move to amend the bill, Madam President. AM 1816, Senator, found on page 1901 of the Journal.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam President and members of the Legislature, this is an amendment which is drafted in response to a letter from the Chiefs of Police Organization of Nebraska. They had a meeting at which they took a vote and unanimously endorsed LB 717 and they also requested that its provisions be extended to all cities throughout the state. This amendment is drafted to achieve that purpose. The only city other than Omaha which might have a provision such as this is Bellevue. I'm not certain if it is in their contract, but I had an indication from Senator Hartnett in a letter that he handed out that it might be. If you have any questions about this amendment or what it does I'm prepared to answer them. I think that the issue is one of statewide concern. In the same way that the chief in Omaha needs this unfettered power, the chiefs of police throughout the state need it also. We are all aware, I think, that many small