

April 15, 1994

**SPEAKER WITHEM:** Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much, Senator Bohlke, and thank you to my colleagues for giving me the opportunity to do this. The only thing I would say about the plaque is Senator Baack will be able to hang it on his wall six months out of the year because he has spent the first year of this Legislature so we'll work out a deal with him. Thank you all very much. Senator Wesely.

**SENATOR WESELY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members, I have a very great honor and privilege to stand before you to acknowledge the departure of our colleague, Dennis Byars. Dennis has served on the Health and Human Services Committee with me the past six years and it has been an outstanding pleasure for me to get to know him and have a chance to work with him. When he first got appointed, he was appointed by Governor Orr and as most of you know, she and I weren't the closest of friends. I had a little bit of suspicion of Dennis. You never know, you never know, and you know what? I found out that he was a wonderful person who was dedicated to concerns that I cared about, had a heart, had a compassion. You've all seen it displayed here on the floor of the Legislature. And we have to, I think, acknowledge that it was just a few years ago that we went through the close election of 1990, the contested vote here, the tie vote that was broken by Senator Byars' vote to...on his own behalf to be seated, and at that time it made some of us angry, you know, and I was one of those. And you know what? That maybe was the best vote he ever made because he has been an outstanding member of the Legislature the last four years. He has done great things on developmental disabilities. He has done great things on clinical labs and issues affecting the counties and the states, the other issues that he has worked with on the Transportation Committee. He is the Chair of the NCSL task force on developmental disabilities. He is an outstanding legislator. He has worked hard. Whenever the committee worked late into the night, Dennis was always there, conscientiously, responsibly working and very reasonable on his decision-making, able to work with everybody, a friendly colleague that I think all of us get along with well. He has got a great family, his wife, Janet, son, Mark, son, Jonathan. He's also paving a path for his son. I think Mark is also one of the most active students on the UNL campus and already been elected to some offices there and we may be seeing the departure of Senator Dennis Byars but maybe we'll see another Byars down here sometime. With that, let's all acknowledge a great senator and good friend, Senator Dennis Byars.