

PRESIDENT: Are you ready, Senator Nelson? The Chair recognizes Senator Nelson. Yes, may we have order in the Chamber please. (Gavel.) Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I rise this morning in support for my alcohol tax bills, LB 280 and LB 280A. This is probably one of the more difficult things that I have had to do since I have been in the body as exactly which way I should go on my override of the Governor's veto. At first I was motivated, when I was out calling the great need in Nebraska for the alcohol, the drug abuse, and the mental health programs, all of these programs and all of these people told me that their funding in the last about four years has neither increased a small amount or had decreased. Particularly in my own Region 3, I saw such a need so the route that I took on my alcohol bill was simply to go out and raise my own money and my own funding for these particular programs. In our society, the alcohol and the drugs and the mental health problems, particularly with the farm economy and so on, I think that they are growing today and the cost is in millions and millions and millions of dollars to our state and to everyone on the alcohol and drug problems. Many of our citizens have been out there and they have worked tremendously hard and tremendously long for these programs, and so for that reason, I did introduce LB 280. It was the vast help of all of these people that I was able to carry through on my programs and I have had tremendous support throughout the state. In our hearing, I think we had a legal pad of about two thirds of the pad, people and groups that were there in support of me that were unable to testify at our original hearings. And yet there is another great reality to me in the state and that is our \$33 million drop in our revenue for 1985 and 1986. Personally, I can see nothing in the picture that that will improve in another year. Coming from outstate Nebraska, it seems like every week I go home I find that the economic situation is probably worse. And as much as I believe in the need for increased funding for the alcohol and drug programs, it has become clearer and clearer to me in the last few days of our poor revenue picture in our state and the consequent falling off of our funds. Many in my programs due to the poor economy, actually there is a greater and further need but I feel that I cannot be responsible and stand up here and ask you to override the Governor's veto when it is necessary to sacrifice and to tighten our belts and make all of these. I am prepared to