

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, this is an amendment which I would like to explain to you and I would be glad to answer any questions. In the 20 years I've been here I've never brought this type of an amendment to the Legislature nor to the Appropriations Committee and it is a little unusual. Many of you have visited the Bongers Museum at David City. He has a collection of antique automobiles, tractors, steam engines, farm equipment, clocks, motorcycles, almost everything. The value is conservatively placed at 5 to 7 or 8 million dollars, no one knows what it would be worth. In addition to the actual value of the equipment, its value is no doubt enhanced by the fact that Mr. Bongers has personally restored every item that has been restored. He has up there, he has 4 quonsets, 40 by 100, that are completely packed with various historical items. He has another structure 48 by 80 and a number of other structures. As an example of some specifics he has one of two Douglas automobiles that were built I believe in the City of Omaha. They were an assembled vehicle. He has one of the only two, I believe, that were ever made. He has one of two Dayton-Stoddard automobiles that are still in existence and in his rather unique method of explaining things he said some fool offered me \$85,000 for it one time and I turned it down. I have known Mr. Bongers all my life. He has no children and he has a deep interest in trying to preserve for future generations a great sector of Nebraska Historical Society. We have here an opportunity, I believe, to allow the Historical Society to examine and to prepare some plans and some cost projections for developing these artifacts and these display materials. Mr. Bongers has many times over the years visited with me relative to his interest in contributing these items to a museum. It is a collection which I think is unrivaled in Nebraska and it is one which, in my opinion and in the opinion of most of the people who have seen it, would certainly be a credit to our Historical Society. I'd just like to point out that maybe some of you saw this last fall when you came to David City and to Bellwood. We toured the museum and a number of you who did visit it, the museum, commented to me about the wide range of items, the excellent condition of those items, the fact that I believe every, in fact, every single engine and every automobile and tractor that are inside the various buildings is in operating condition, made so by Mr. Bongers. Some time ago I had a small videotape done of his operation about a year ago. Many of you have seen that and Mr. Bongers commented that when the question was raised as to where he found the parts for these vehicles,