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the Governor of the great state of Nebraska, Mike Johanns and his wife, Stephanie.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Governor, if you would please address the Legislature. Members, please be seated.

GOVERNOR JOHANNNS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, distinguished guests, and friends. The Legislature has completed its work, and I appreciate your dedication and your effort. Nebraskans have faced difficult choices, because of the economic slow down. This Legislature, too, has faced difficult choices. All along I said we may disagree on how to reach a balanced budget, but we must work to get the job done. In the end we did agree on some parts of the solution to our state's fiscal challenges, and we disagreed on some and agreed on others. But ultimately the budget shortfall, as defined by the Forecasting Board, was addressed. As we go forward, I repeat my commitment to working with you, to restrain spending, protect our priorities, and do all we can working together to meet our challenges. Unfortunately, yes, at least one good friend has decided not to return to the Legislature; Senator George Coordsen. I want to personally and publicly thank George for his leadership, his wit, and most importantly for his friendship. Thank you, George. Let me lead a round of applause for you. (Applause) You're a good man, George, and you will be remembered fondly. To the rest of the members of the Legislature, until we come here together again, I bid you farewell and Godspeed. Thank you. (Applause)

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Committee, would you please escort the Governor and the First Lady from the Chamber.

Members, if we could please be seated so we can finish. Thank you. Senator Coordsen, I just would offer you one observation; certainly, when you came into this Legislature they never clapped and cheered that hard. (Laughter) I'm red-faced because I forgot two very important people who have done a lot of work for us. They're our Legislative Coordinators, Chuck and Kurt. They are the ones who get so many things ready. They do many, many things around this Legislature. And I am remiss in not thanking them and recognizing them. I'd like to do so at