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FLOOR DEBATE

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Sioux City. That is not the case. This has nothing to do with building buildings or putting up some huge sign that says this is our brand new campus. We are renting...and when I say "we," Northeast Community College is renting a building for six years for 10,000 square feet of space. That space will be divided up so that we can have classrooms, and inside those classrooms we're going to have students from the area, from Nebraska, from Dakota, from Thurston, from Dixon County, from Wayne County, and they will be taking classes, just like they already do in Wayne, just like they already do in O'Neill, similar to like what they do in Norfolk, except in Norfolk we have the bricks and the mortar and the building, and the broadcasting program, and the partnership with the hospital. This is going to be a rental agreement for six years to operate a 10,000 square foot office space so that we can educate kids that we were sending to Iowa. Now, this is one of the things that we can move into if we get the money, but we need the money in Northeast Community College because we need to maintain the programs we already have, like those kids from Newman Grove that want to graduate and attend an ag program at Northeast and farm in southern Madison County. That's who we need. We need the programs in O'Neill to exist. And Senator Fischer raised a number of questions. We're teaching in Ainsworth accounting, general biology, business statistics, essential conversation Spanish, English composition, art history, LPN certification. Forty-five students are in an on-site class in Ainsworth, Nebraska, already, taking nurse aide classes so that they can work in nursing homes and hospitals, in healthcare. We're in Bassett, we're in Stuart, we're in Springview. We're all over northeast Nebraska. To say that this is to build a campus is wrong. This is to maintain the quality service that Northeast Community College provides to the 20-county area. That's what this is about, and I don't like it any more than anybody else. In fact, property tax increase in my first 60 days, that's scary, but I'm doing it because I see the value of the programs. I see what's being done across the area in all 20 counties. And, yes, Senator Fischer, people are paying the difference, just like they're paying the difference on LB 664, the critical hospital access bill that you've got. People are paying the difference. There's money associated with these bills and that's why they're important because they do things that benefit Nebraskans, and this benefits Nebraskans.