

Transcript Prepared By the Clerk of the Legislature
Transcriber's Office

Appropriations Committee
February 24, 2011

[LB282]

The Committee on Appropriations met at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 24, 2011, in Room 1003 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on LB282 and agency budgets. Senators present: Lavon Heidemann, Chairperson; John Harms, Vice Chairperson; Danielle Conrad; Tony Fulton; Tom Hansen; Heath Mello; John Nelson; Jeremy Nordquist; and John Wightman. Senators absent: None.

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: We're going to go ahead and get started. Welcome to Appropriations. Sorry, we're just a little bit running late here. We had a meeting that ran through the noonhour and I apologize for that. We're going to get started with introductions. Over to the right, way down below, Senator Jeremy Nordquist from Omaha, District 7. Sitting next to his left is Senator Tom Hansen from North Platte, District 42. Sitting next to him will be Senator Danielle Conrad from Lincoln, 46; she'll be joining us later. Sitting next to her left is Senator John Wightman from Lexington, District 36. I am Senator Lavon Heidemann from Elk Creek, southeast Nebraska, District 1. Liz Hruska is the fiscal analyst to my left at the present time. Anne Fargen is our committee clerk. And Christina is our page today and every day. Starting over here to my left is Senator John Harms from Scottsbluff, District 48. Maybe joining us later, he's been under the weather for the last couple days, will be Senator John Nelson from Omaha, District 6. Arriving shortly, we hope, is Senator Tony Fulton from Lincoln, District 29. And Senator Heath Mello has, I think, two or three bills up today; he'll be in and out somewhat; so he's from Omaha, District 5. At this time we'd like to remind you if you have cell phones to please shut them off as not to be disruptive later. Testifier sheets are on the table near the back doors. You need to fill these out completely and put them in the box on the table when you testify. At the beginning of your testimony please state and spell your name. Nontestifier sheets near the back doors, if you do not want to testify but would like to record your support or opposition, you only need to fill this out if you will not be publicly testifying. If you have printed materials to distribute, please give them to the page at the beginning of your testimony. We need 12 copies. In an effort to be fair to all that want to testify on the budget this year, the Appropriations Committee will be using the light system. The principal introducer or the principal agency representative will not have a time limit. We do urge you though to keep your testimony concise and on topic. All testifiers following will be given four minutes. On the light system sitting on the testifier table you will notice a green light when you start your testimony. When you have one minute left the yellow light will turn on. When the red light turns on we ask that you just please wrap up your testimony. Following the principal introducer on bill hearings, we'll take the testimony first from proponents, then opponents, then in a neutral position. For agency budget hearings, we will take general comments for the agency budget proposal following the principal agency representative. With that, we are going to start the public hearing today on LB282. Senator Loudon, welcome.

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SENATOR LOUDEN: (Exhibit 1) Thank you, and good afternoon, Senator Heidemann and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is LeRoy Louden and that's spelled L-o-u-d-e-n, and I represent District 49. I'm introducing LB282, which would appropriate \$15,000 from the General Fund to the Designated Collection Fund for use by the Commission on Indian Affairs. Last year LB1002 appropriated \$25,000 for grants that would be awarded by the Commission on Indian Affairs within 30 miles of Whiteclay. Since LB1002 was enacted last year, there has been a great deal of interest in Whiteclay. There was a cleanup funded by the Attorney General, which helped the appearance of the area. The bonding has been completed to build a nursing home there by the Oglala Sioux, a water pipeline is being installed from the Missouri River across reservations of Standing Rock Reservation and it's now nearing Pine Ridge, South Dakota. It's out there about three miles north of Pine Ridge, is my understanding. Terry Robbins, the Sheridan County Sheriff, received a grant of \$10,000 to do the extra patrol time in Whiteclay. He hasn't started using the money yet as he was only notified of the grant funding around the 1st of January, and his idea is to spend extra patrol time when the weather gets warmer and the days are longer and people are out, about, and around in the evenings. At the present time, Sheriff Robbins is using a security camera that was purchased through a grant from Homeland Security to monitor some of the area of Whiteclay. This camera system has been very worthwhile as a dispatcher in the sheriff's office in Rushville can monitor the activity going on. Recently, they noticed a person lying in the street and they sent a patrol officer to pick up the person before they experienced hypothermia or worse. Sheriff Robbins indicated to me that his grant proposal would be to install another camera in Whiteclay and also hook up a recording device so that they could review any disturbances in the town. Since there's already a camera and infrastructure is already in place, the cost for a new camera would be estimated at \$8,000, and also for \$1,000 they could install a recording device and that recording device would be able to store activity for up to about 20 days or so. So they thought it would be quite worthwhile for something like that in that area. And that's all run by microwave clear back to Rushville. It's on tall poles so...and I asked him if that could be compromised and he said, well, they'd have to climb the pole in order to get up there because it's all several feet up in the air. This bill, LB282, gives additional funding for the people in the Whiteclay area and a chance to get some help they need and to try to make a difference. These funds and grant proposals are new to the people in this area and they've never had to deal with something like this before or been able to work with grants. They may be slow in getting grant applications going but, again, they are learning. If they have the opportunity to apply for additional grants, they will be more prepared and know what to do and do it in a timely manner. At the present time, we're still receiving grants for the rest of the money that's available there. From LB1002, grants must be applied for through a government entity and the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs has been very frugal in awarding these grant applications and that was done in LB1002. You had to get it through a government entity there, such as the county, the city or someone like that, and that I think is something that's been quite

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worthwhile because none of this money has been put out frivolously for issues that, oh, for instance, there were some grants applied for that were going to have meetings and they were going to facilitate meetings and like that. And I said, myself, that we've had meetings up there for the last 60 years. We don't need more meetings. We don't need more talking; we need a little bit more doing. Today there are applications being drafted from people in Rushville and in Whiteclay. One proposal would be to purchase a quilting machine for a newly opened Native Quilting Shop. Another project is from a man from Rushville who has been reorganizing a golf program called the First Tee of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, which is a youth-based program that uses golf as a tool to teach life skills to Native American young people, ages 5 to 18 years old. This program is being carried out in Rushville, Gordon, and Martin, South Dakota, and on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in southwestern South Dakota. The program has become the most widely used approach to positive youth development in the United States. Some of the things that they were thinking about having is they need, oh, like \$3,400 to implement some of it for the students up there, such as now in Shannon County alone they have over 1,200 students from the four schools in Shannon County, which is in South Dakota, from kindergarten through the eighth grade that they will be teaching this program to. Another part of it is he would be looking for funding because many of the children don't have the \$20 it takes to get into the program fee. They have a fee, as usual, to run those. And I think they said they had 1,326 kids and most of those kids in that program qualify for free or reduced lunch program, so they were trying to set it up so that they could enter those kids into the program and be able to fund it so that these kids could get in there. The First Tee Program of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation is the only chapter in the United States that is based on an American Indian Reservation. And I've inquired from people in the area, both from the reservation and Nebraska, and the program seems to be very well-received by the native people. And I'd state that if progress can be made with the young people, the outlook for the future will be greater. We must do what we can to give young people on the reservation and Whiteclay areas some advantages besides just beer from Whiteclay. I think this is if we're going to solve problems on the reservation in western Nebraska, we have to work with the young people. That's one of the major places to start. One thing I would point out, that Whiteclay is actually a suburb of Pine Ridge, South Dakota, and Pine Ridge right now, when I asked the other day, when I met with President Yellow Bird Steele, he said that the population of Pine Ridge right now is a little over 7,000, just the town of Pine Ridge, so it's actually one of the bigger towns in that area up there. And Whiteclay is actually a suburb of it. They say it's two miles away but it isn't two miles. It's got street lights all the way and short walking distance. It starts right at the border on both sides. They trade...and Whiteclay is where they trade for goods and services, such as groceries, repairs, feed, and other items that are sold in Whiteclay. In 2009, there was \$273,000 in sales tax revenue from Whiteclay sales. The alcohol tax for 2009 was \$133,000, a little over \$133,000. Also in 2009 in Whiteclay there was \$2.7 million worth of groceries sold. And one thing when they talk about how many cans of beer are sold in Whiteclay, they don't tell all of it, that the Arrowhead Foods there, which the food stores, the grocery

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stores don't sell any alcohol whatsoever, Arrowhead Foods sold \$42,000 worth of broasted chickens in 2009. The net taxable sales in 2009 in Whiteclay was nearly \$5 million, and that compares with a lot of towns up and down the countryside when they have \$5 million worth of sales. There are 20 businesses listed in...by the Nebraska Department of Revenue in the Whiteclay zip code, and there are 4 of them that are off-sale beer stores. Also, I understand that 20/20, an ABC national television program, is planning an episode on the Pine Ridge Reservation and the Whiteclay area, so I would hope that we would have some positive programs working there. And I will say that the small amount of money that we have appropriated so far in LB1002 has become what I call a tipping point or a deciding factor to perhaps improve the area. And when I mention tipping point, I don't know if anybody...if you've ever read the book that John Stossel put out about the tipping points, that if you can do a little something and it's just enough to tip the balance to go the other way. And I think something like this, where we've done this in the last year or so, I feel that we are starting to get a tipping point here because of the nursing home facilities. We're trying to get a water line into there and actually they've had to pass some regulations so that water line could come on into Nebraska to service this nursing home. So there are a lot of things happening that if we can just keep on working a little bit at a time as we were doing I think we will prevail. With the continued funding of LB1002, a difference can be made. Law enforcement and a recycling project are programs that combine to improve the area around Whiteclay. And this town, when you think about it, can have retail sales to the benefit of Nebraska. With over 7,000 population in Pine Ridge, they have their grocery store over there. The reason they don't have...the reason they come into Nebraska for the groceries is because actually the grocery store on the reservation is owned by an outfit out of Illinois that works through the tribe somehow or another. So the grocery store is locally owned. They know the people and they handle them, and this other one, the reason they undersell the one in Pine Ridge. There are other issues from that area. I've been told, and I don't have the numbers for sure, but the federal government interjects about \$82 million a year into Pine Ridge Reservation and most of that money is probably spent in Nebraska. It's spent down into Chadron and Gordon, Rushville, and you can see how much of it, \$3 million of it is...or nearly \$5 million of it is spent in Whiteclay alone. So you know that's all money that comes from someplace else and Nebraska is really on the receiving end of a lot of that, a lot of that revenue that goes into there. Now that type of revenue is mostly those people are low income and on welfare type deals, and that's what it is, a welfare check. In fact the people that run the grocery stores in Whiteclay claim that on the first of the month and when the checks come in, they have to put extra people on duty and have extra supplies in order to take care of the rush for the first day or two that when they come in there. So it is...they talk about, you know, you always see about the liquor and everything in Whiteclay. That really isn't what can be done. If that can be kind of cleared up and something done about that, we do have a very, very able area there that will benefit the tax structure for Nebraska. And I would ask that you approve and advance LB282 and I'd be happy to answer any questions. [LB282]

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SENATOR HEIDEMANN: You stated in 2009 there was \$273,000, a little bit over, in sales tax revenue from Whiteclay sales. Is that state sales tax? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Yeah. Yeah, that... [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Is there a local option? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: No. No, because they're not an incorporated town. That's just the state 5.5 percent sales tax. There's no local option tax that goes with that. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: And there they could never be eligible to get that because it's... [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Well, I've been working with some of the county commissioners and stuff, seeing if there was somehow or another they can...that a county can levy a sales tax, but at the present time, the statutes, about the only way they can levy a sales tax, the county, is for I think for... [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Schilz has a bill that would change that, doesn't he? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Well, his could be used for roads and it would be just used to construct roads, which is that much. The other one I think is law enforcement. I think is it Thurston County, one of these counties over here with... [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: There's only one, I know that. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: ...that does it and you got to have an interlocal agreement with the town in order to levy that sales tax. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: I'm just thinking that if you could get a local option sales tax, it looks like you could probably drag in anywhere from another \$50,000 to \$75,000 and somewhat use that money to help get things up and going. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Well, yes, and that's...Jack Andersen, the county commissioner, we've been working on that for about two years and unless we just introduce legislation that a county can have a sales tax, which when you do that there's 92 other counties that can do the same thing, so I don't know, you know, how well that will fly. So that's where we are at the present time. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Wightman. [LB282]

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SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Yes, Senator Louden, a year ago I know there was some discussion about whether South Dakota had any appropriations with regard to Pine Ridge. Has there been any movement by South Dakota in the last year, or do you know? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Probably less, Senator Wightman, because they've got a new president up there. Now it's John Steele and before that it was President Two Bulls. Now the other day we had a meeting with John Steele and his people and Johannis' office and Lee Terry and a bunch of them in Omaha, and we asked him about that and he doesn't have much use for South Dakota. South Dakota won't do anything for him. I guess they...because we said, well, what about law enforcement, do you allow the South Dakota state patrol, you know, what can they do? And he said, oh, if they come on the reservation, I'll have them arrested. So that's (laugh) I mean they're their own separate country and they don't get along. And what's amazing is there's a representative in the South Dakota legislature that lives right there not too far east of Pine Ridge and he's been a representative for years, but when you're a representative in the South Dakota legislature, you don't get much done, you know. So every time he says they try to get some legislation in, why, it doesn't get through their legislature up there. So there isn't a lot of push in South Dakota because that's the reason they're building a nursing home in Nebraska, because South Dakota wouldn't let them build it because they thought they had enough beds. And I see now where South Dakota is going to cut out some more of the beds because they don't want to pay the Medicaid. So they tried then, came down here and I think it took us about three or four years of legislation to get it passed so they can build this nursing home in Nebraska on tribal land. And so that Nebraska isn't stuck with the Medicaid on that, the Indian Health Service is supposed to pick up 100 percent, I think 110 percent of the cost or something like that. And so that's how that came about. [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: And I think you're right on South Dakota. I think they maybe are based on...the legislators may be based on a commission on the money they don't spend, but they don't spend very much, I don't think, for much of anything. How big...how much population does Pine Ridge have? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: The reservation? [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Is there a city called Pine Ridge right on the edge? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Pine Ridge, South Dakota, is the town. [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Is the town. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: That's the town of about 7,000 or so. I've heard people tell me it's way over 7,000 because I'm waiting for this 2010 Census to come in to see what it says.

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And we've asked on the reservation for a long time, when you go on your Google on the reservation, I don't know, they call it 8,000 or 9,000 tribal members, something like that. And they tell me that...and the other day I asked John Steele and it's over 35,000 people living on that reservation. [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: On the reservation. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: On the reservation. [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: So the reservation is much larger than the... [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Well, it's 3,400 square miles, which is bigger than a few counties in Nebraska. [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Bigger than most of the counties in Nebraska, outside Cherry, I think. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Yeah, it goes clear up nearly to Interstate 80 and it goes...I don't know if you're familiar with where Martin, South Dakota, is. See, Martin, South Dakota, I think sits in Bennett County maybe, I don't know, one of them, Bennett or Shannon, and that county isn't in the reservation, but all the way around is in reservation. And then it hooks up to the Rosebud Reservation on the east side. [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: That would be almost the size of Lincoln and Dawson County combined I think as far as area, so... [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: And that's been...that's what some of our meeting was the other day, is the Bureau of Indian Affairs is the one that controls the law enforcement on the reservation and they cut the law enforcement down from 70 to 40, and I pointed that out to our Representative, Lee Terry, and also to Senator Johanns and some of them that we need to have that reevaluated. They used to have around 70 police officers up there and when you go up to somewhere between 35,000 and 50,000 population and then cut your law enforcement in half, why, it's no wonder it's wide open country up there. [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: So there's not much hope that South Dakota is either going to share in or participate in anything that we do. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Well, I...Hal Daub wants us to put in a resolution that the Governors would have to sit down and do something about it, and he swears up and down they would, and I don't know if Colby, Senator Coash, is going to do anything like that or not. But I think we have some dialogue with them from time to time, but I don't expect a lot. I mean as far as Whiteclay, this is...Nebraska receives probably the lion's

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share of the revenue off of that reservation, Whiteclay receives some, Chadron and area. I mean that's the reason Walmart built a Super Walmart in Chadron was...it wasn't because it's a college town. It's because of that reservation up there. And on the first of the month and that time, why, they got that parking lot that, what, covers four acres or so, and you can't hardly paw your way on to the parking lot when they get their checks in up there. I mean this is a big deal. In Chadron you have to plan your orders to come in just before that time so that you can have it on hand, because if you have it stocked, you don't have room to stock it, but if you have it just a day or two before that, then it can...it's usually all sold in a matter of days up there. It's a big deal up there selling to Native Americans on that reservation. [LB282]

SENATOR WIGHTMAN: Thank you, Senator Louden. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Hansen. [LB282]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator Louden, is there a school in Whiteclay? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: No. [LB282]

SENATOR HANSEN: So all the children in Whiteclay go to school in Pine Ridge or do they go somewhere else? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Well, no, they'd have to go down...they go south someplace. I really don't know. [LB282]

SENATOR HANSEN: They go in Nebraska. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: But I think they either go down towards Rushville or someplace like that. But I don't think, no, there isn't...I don't think there's even a grade school or anything left up there anymore. [LB282]

SENATOR HANSEN: I was looking for some responsibility that South Dakota may have, but they don't want to teach our children either. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Well, and on the reservations, yeah, the reservation, I don't think they...that's all federal people and their own school system on the reservation. [LB282]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: They do have a...they have a college there that they're running on that reservation there in Pine Ridge and that was part of the deal with putting in this nursing home, that they were schooling some of those people to do that type of work in

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a nursing home. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Are there any other questions? Seeing none, thank you. [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: Yeah, thank you. [LB282]

JUDI GAIASHKIBOS: Good afternoon. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Welcome. [LB282]

JUDI GAIASHKIBOS: (Exhibit 2) Thank you, Senator Heidemann, members of the Appropriations Committee. I will be back later in the day but I did want to comment and lend support to Senator Louden on LB282. I am Judi gaiashkibos, the executive director of the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs, and my name is spelled g-a-i-a-s-h-k-i-b-o-s. I'm a member of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska. We are the agency that oversees and administers the funds that you awarded last year for this purpose, and I have brought along a handout for all of you about the grants that we've awarded and the two that we intend to award, so I would pass that out to you. And I would just like to say that I am here to support future funding. As was stated, the state of Nebraska benefits from the Oglala Sioux Lakota people coming to our state. The community of Whiteclay--it sounds as though perhaps some of you haven't been actually to Whiteclay--there is no school there and it's not a community that you and I know of. You know, there's not a post office. It's not a nice little Nebraska community. Originally, it started out as the sole purpose was pretty much to sell alcohol to a dry reservation. So I would really encourage you to visit the community so you can really appreciate the impact that the community does have on the Oglala Reservation, the amount of alcohol that's sold to a dry reservation. But on the flip side of that, as Senator Louden has said, much money is coming to the state of Nebraska through the purchase of alcohol as well as the tribal members that come to Chadron, Rushville and Gordon and shop at Walmart. So our state is benefiting, you know, by millions of dollars worth of sales from the Oglala Sioux Lakota Nation. Last Friday, our office was contacted, as Senator Louden stated, by a young woman that was doing research for the 20/20 show that Diane Sawyer is going to do, and what she asked from us, and I brought this along for you as well, she wanted to know how many cans of beer were actually sold there and they are tracking four families on the reservation and have been doing so for the last six months, and one of the common denominators to those families were alcohol abuse. So where are they getting the alcohol on a dry reservation that doesn't allow for alcohol? So here in Nebraska. And I keep hearing what is South Dakota doing, what are they going to bring to the table. We have had meetings with, as Senator Louden said, with a group of people, the State-Tribal Committee, people from the Congressional delegation. So I do think that that dialogue is moving along. What I do want to show you is this graph that I printed off that was provided to us by the Liquor Control Commission and

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what it shows is quite, you know, it's hard to believe (laugh): 38,163 cases of beer sold by Jumping Eagle; 48,025 cases of beer sold at D&S Pioneer Service; Stateline Liquor sells 47,471 cases of beer; and 73,045 cases sold by Arrowhead Inn. And we only have 20-some people living at this little town of Whiteclay, unincorporated, so, you know, do the math. Multiply 24 times all of that and it's a lot of cans of beer, somewhere around 5 million cans of beer that are being sold and taken back to South Dakota and our state benefits. So we think that in light of the spotlight that's going to be shown on our state and the history of this, that it would be really beneficial for the Legislature to once again fund a mere \$15,000 to support what we've already begun: the law enforcement by Sheridan County Sheriff's Office; the First Tee of Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, the youth program that we believe will help young Indian children take a different path in life so that they don't end up down at Whiteclay dead, frozen in winter and, you know, at the mercy of this wretched disease of alcoholism; and lastly, the all ABOUT group which is empowering native businesses. And so in summary I guess I think that we have been good stewards of the \$25,000 that you have awarded us. My staff, we are a very small agency of just three, so we had to make sure that we were in compliance with the granting of the State Budget Office and so we developed the RFP, we posted that, and then we had a review committee comprised of people from DHS who have that experience. I was not directly involved because I felt like it was a conflict of interest. Senator Loudon was involved in the review and then one other person. So we believe we'll have all this money funded, and that the next year \$15,000 could be utilized either by these same grantees or others. And with that, I would be open to questions. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Senator Conrad. [LB282]

SENATOR CONRAD: Thank you, Judi, and thank you, Senator Loudon. I didn't get a chance to mention that before. But before delving too deep into the specifics, I did just want to point out one thing that I really like about the approach Senator Loudon has taken and this Legislature has taken thus far and what this bill represents as a natural progression of those initial steps, is that this is such a big problem, complicated by a variety of jurisdictional issues between the sovereign nation and the two states and all of the players involved. And what I think is so hopeful about what's happened thus far through your grants and what's planned on the horizon is that it's taking small steps but making a concrete difference that we can see and know that has extraordinary benefits for changing some of the culture and dynamics in this very, very difficult climate and situation. So I just...it's really more of a comment than a question but you've been working with these issues longer than anybody so if you want to just talk maybe a little bit about where we've been in the past and where we are now and the changes that you've seen and how you feel about them, that would be appreciated. [LB282]

JUDI GAIASHKIBOS: Okay. I've been the director for 16 years so I started out working with Governor Nelson and we had a task force and a group called the Border Tiospaye, and so then it went, you know, to Governor Johanns and now Governor Heineman, and

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I think that I'm feeling very hopeful that finally we're making some progress at that last meeting that we had with President John Yellow Bird Steele. We do have change in tribal leadership, as well as we do here at our Legislature with term limits, and we have a new Governor in South Dakota. And most recently the new Governor appointed, he elevated my position, my counterpart in South Dakota, to a cabinet level, so the new person is...the Secretary of Indian Affairs is J.R. LaPlante and he is a Sioux tribal member and he is...I believe he's Cheyenne River and he's an attorney and a former judge. His wife is an attorney as well. And so I think that indicates that the state of South Dakota does take Indian Affairs seriously by having a cabinet Secretary on Indian Affairs. I have been in dialogue with him. He is willing to come to the table. So I think that shows, again, a renewed commitment to addressing this issue. I think that \$15,000 is just such a small amount of money. You know, it's almost embarrassing. But I do still think that it's hopeful and promising, and so you have to start somewhere. And so I do feel really appreciative that Senator Loudon has stepped up to the plate and done this because in the past, you know, really there wasn't anything done. We have hearings. And so I think we have to keep moving forward and build on the momentum that we have now. And I know our agency is committed to that and we've spent a lot of time on this small amount of money and we've worked, you know, many phone calls, e-mails with different nonprofits up in that area. And I think at the end of the day we are making a difference in the lives of the children on the reservation. They have...as far as children at Whiteclay going to school there, the people that live at Whiteclay that own the liquor stores are non-Indian people. So they wouldn't most likely send their children into a, you know, a reservation where it's a Bureau of Indian Affairs school or the Red Cloud Indian School, so they would go, if they have children, down to the schools in Nebraska. So I guess I would like to end my career thinking that we did something about this and not that this is just an ongoing thing that I pass on to the next director of the Indian Commission and say, good luck, I wasn't able to do anything about this, you know? But I think that you all and we all can do something and we are, so... [LB282]

SENATOR CONRAD: And continuing to move forward, even if it's just a little bit at a time. [LB282]

JUDI GAIASHKIBOS: Little by little. [LB282]

SENATOR CONRAD: I concur the amount is embarrassingly small in comparison to the gravity of the problem, but it is a step forward. So thank you. That time line is very helpful. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Are there any other questions? Seeing none, thanks, Judi. [LB282]

JUDI GAIASHKIBOS: Uh-huh. See you later. [LB282]

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Appropriations Committee
February 24, 2011

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Is anyone wishing to testify in favor of LB282? Is anybody wishing to testify in opposition of LB282. Does anybody wish to testify in the neutral position on LB282? Seeing none, would Senator Louden like to close? [LB282]

SENATOR LOUDEN: I'll waive closing. I think we've had a good discussion on it. I thank the committee for their attention. [LB282]

SENATOR HEIDEMANN: Thanks. With that, we will close the public hearing on LB282. [LB282]