

April 15, 1981

LB 318

programs without being impeded by a lack of dollars or the uncertainty of dollars. We also provide in this modification what you call the hold harmless clause. This means that since we have declining enrollment in the State of Nebraska that schools would not suffer a total loss of state aid simply because they have a declining enrollment and in some cases rather severe, and this would be predicated over a 2 percent figure over a period of years. So we have to diminish the blow of schools losing money because of declining students. I think this is appropriate. And by the way, this particular provision of the bill is not unique with Nebraska. Surrounding states have similar types of clauses in their school aid and foundation act. The other provision that we placed in here is for vocational education as I mentioned a moment ago. We provided in here a weighted program for vocational education, for instance, Consumer Homemaking, Distributive Education, would be 1.2; Diversified Occupations would be 1.3. This would also include Health Occupations, Economics, Vocational Agriculture, those kinds of programs and they are in your handout. That would be 1.3 for every child enrolled, or student. Another area we placed in there is Special Vocational Needs, Business Office Practice and Traits, 1.4. That is the vocational program. I want you to know that this particular part of this bill is supported by the Economic Advisory Committee of the State of Nebraska made up of people from throughout the state. They are very strongly in favor. I am sure you have received correspondence from those individuals asking you to support this provision of the bill. Senator Hoagland came in with a bill that tried to treat gifted children, and for several years the committee has received legislation promoting gifted education in the public schools. There are some provisions in the present state aid law now which says that schools providing gifted programs receive some dollars. However, that is in the equalization section. Unless you are a school that receives equalization, you will not receive any dollars for having a gifted program. What we are proposing to do here is put it in the foundation side and if you have a gifted program that has been approved by the State Department of Education, for every child that you have in a gifted program, it is worth a weighted program of 1.3. In addition to this, as you know, in recent years we have had a large influx of people coming from the Far East and other parts of the country, or nation, the world I mean, and many of them have congregated in certain communities, and so that is referred to as Limited English Proficiency. Those schools which provide programs both large and small would receive again additional dollars for trying to provide to those kinds of children a proficiency