

SENATOR NICHOL: What does it apply to now, Senator Cullan?

SENATOR CULLAN: I am not sure. That is what I was trying to find out. Senator Koch, could you answer that question please?

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: I would be happy to, Senator Cullan. The bill, last year's 257, applies only to the public schools in the State of Nebraska. But originally the bill was going to apply to every state organization and so we made it specific it went only to public schools and historically the money had always gone to public schools. Senator Nichol says he puts in new language that says "or/and technical community colleges" but he didn't say state colleges, he didn't say university system. He only puts them in and tech colleges are considered to be postsecondary institutions.

SENATOR CULLAN: Okay. Senator Koch, do you know approximately how much money we are talking about total?

SENATOR KOCH: Under this first cycle, Senator Cullan, we have \$4 million worth of severance tax to be made available to those who are eligible under the grant system. And we had the first time, and I want to make this clear, on the first application, the applications were almost four million dollars themselves for weatherization grants but we are only going to give less than a million.

SENATOR CULLAN: Okay, thank you, Senator Koch. Mr. President, members of the Legislature, it appears that, number one, we are granting the technical community colleges an advantage which the rest of postsecondary education would not have by making them eligible for these funds. I think if we are going to allow the technical community colleges to come in, then we ought to let the University and the state college system as well. Number two, it appears to me from the information Senator Koch has provided us that the demand for these funds is already considerably exceeds the availability of these funds and that there is no particular reason for us to then expand the pool of those people who apply. Number three, I think the real reason for this bill is that the Western Technical Community College wants to participate in a geothermal program and that this will somehow impact on them. I don't know whether that is an advantageous program or not but I think that that is something they could do with their own revenues, that is something that we don't need and that we don't need to do that with this particular bill. Now if they want...I guess