

for other notable initiatives for the good life in Nebraska. As a reminder I would cite to you this Legislature's support in recent years with state tax dollars for such programs as the Animal Science Building to the amount of \$19 million, the Morrill Hall renovation for \$4 million, the Lab Science Building for \$14.5 million, the Lied Performing Arts Center for \$5 million, the Food Processing and Veterinary Clinic, \$14 million. We have shown commitment in all of these critical areas for the benefits of Nebraska and Nebraskans. I urge your support and commitment to an equally important project, this one that does not call for state tax dollars. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Moore, followed by Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR MOORE: Mr. President and members, I guess I'm the fourth committee member in a row to stand, but I guess I'm going to talk with a little different twist. Those of you who have read the paper realize that I was the lone no vote in this in committee and it's not that I'm necessarily anti-University Med Center. As a matter of fact, last year when the resolution came across granting the authority for the \$27 million project, I voted for that across the board in support of it. But that in itself, the fact that the University Med Center is back here twelve months later with a proposal that costs \$20 million more than the 27 million that we granted last year, I guess that's just the first flag that was raised that bothered me a little bit and a number of other things are bothering me, and because of that uncomfortable attitude, I have decided to vote against this resolution in committee and plan to do so again today. As I said, as we all know, last year my seatmate and friend here, Senator Schmit, said a variety of things that predicted what would happen. I think he'll probably talk a little more about that in his time, but just the fact that they were here last year and came back this year bothers me. The second thing that bothers me is that I have handed out to the body an article from the January 15 Omaha World-Herald. It talks about hospital occupancy rates in Omaha. Now I need to mention this is licensed beds and you can hear all sorts of reasons why licensed beds are not an accurate figure of how full a hospital is, but as this article points out, you will notice that there has been a significant decline in occupancy rates in Omaha hospitals. If you look at the far right on that graph, the University of Nebraska Med Center, according to this report, is at 48 percent