

conversation, it's getting very difficult to hear. (Gavel.) Please. Thank you, Senator Hall.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President. Simple little priority bill here, I appreciate that. If you look at the handout that I gave you, it's two pages, and it shows some of the types of attractions that will benefit from this. These are facilities that, in every case, have aged. Many of them are nearing the 50-year point in their life-span and have difficult times keeping up just the basic repairs necessary to provide the attractions that benefit the City of Omaha and Douglas County. The additional tax that would be levied would be directly used to provide for improvements in these areas. The current board, that has set up the commission that would provide for determination with regard to where this money is spent, would make those decisions based on need, and there would be a full, open public hearing, as there currently is on these issues and there would be a number of these groups who would vie for those dollars. I think that it provides an alternative source of funding that we see fit to provide for with regard to the tourism aspect, the promotion of Nebraska and its counties and its attractions. And I think to expand it at this point to allow for minor capital construction needs is a much needed and a very important aspect and just a continuation of the thought process that goes along with selling this promotional tourism feature of Nebraska to not only members and residents of our state but from travelers who come through the State of Nebraska on a daily basis throughout the spring, summer and fall. The argument that if you don't keep the facilities up you won't have people frequently coming to them very often is one that doesn't have to be explained very well. It speaks for itself. We had a bill in here just the other day, it was in our Urban Affairs Committee and it talked about the issue of Western Heritage Museum. I think it was Senator Ashford who carried the bill and brought it before the committee. It allowed for the museum, itself, to be able to use some city money, some bonding aspect so that they could repair the girders that held up the parking lot, suspended it over a city street and some railroad right of way, allowed for that to take place so that the monies would be available, and that museum could continue to function, could continue to provide the attraction that it does to visitors that come from all over the country to view it. Those types of things that they display there and exhibit, such as the Byron Reed collection and a number of other things, provide much attraction and entertainment to people who visit the City of