

SPEAKER BARRETT: The objection is so stated and I think the objection should have been stated earlier and I'm sorry if I didn't recognize you. I would at this point recognize Senator McFarland to close. Thank you.

SENATOR MCFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd welcome Senator Schmit's comments on the bill. I know there may be a few people that have reservations about the bill and certainly that may be legitimate and I hope that after this amendment, assuming it is added, we can have that full discussion on the bill itself. The amendment, however, I think is something that if you look at it is a very reasonable and actually clarifies the intent of the bill. It addresses the concerns of some of the people who had, in fact, expressed reservations about the bill. Such people as Senator Ashford, such people as Senator Hefner who indeed have supported LB 775 in the past and have been reluctant to make any changes in it. But the concerns that were expressed was, what exactly is meant by average number of employees and will that apply just to Nebraska employees or to employees out of the state for corporations that have employees across the nation? The amendment itself, I think, addresses those concerns. It actually clarifies, specifies that what we're talking about is full-time employees that are hired and continue to be employed by the taxpayer that applies for the tax credits. It also applies to only Nebraska employees. It doesn't apply to employees in other states because that is what we're really intending here is to keep the jobs of Nebraska employees within the state. So I will ask that you adopt the amendment. Then we can certainly debate the merits of the bill itself and debate whether this is something that needs to be done. I sincerely think that we need to limit tax credits only to corporations and companies that maintain an employment level within our state. But as I said, I think that can be done later. I thank the Revenue Committee for their support and I thank the senators who spoke up and gave their kind comments about supporting the amendment and were quite honest and said they may have reservations about the bill and want further debate on it, and I look forward to the debate, assuming the amendment was added. I would ask you respectfully that you add the amendment, then certainly I would like to hear what Senator Schmit has to say about the bill. I'd like to hear what...or perhaps other members of the Revenue Committee, the three members who may not have voted to advance it out of committee would have to say and I would like to hear what other people would have to say or