

out that Nebraska is last among the states to fund secondary vocational education, and this is a bill, again, that is important to the entire state. We can't say that this is any kind of a pork barrel. It is an overall bill that would help all districts. Again, to reiterate, less than half of Nebraska's youth pursue postsecondary education, and I think that some of the things that the bill does could be so beneficial because there are things that it can be used for, the money can be used to acquire more modern instructional equipment. They can start new vocational programs, so there is flexibility in the bill. They can expand an existing program by adding a course or a new dimension to something that they have already developed, and I think that is important. Again, it shows the flexibility of this apportionment of money. It also can be used to include the acquisition and use of the Nebraska Career Information System and, certainly, that is something that our young people need to look at today is the careers that are available to them, and vocational education has been perhaps the forerunner in career education in this state and in this nation. And, certainly, looking at young people, that is something they need to know is what job market will be available for them. Again, it will, as I said, support and implement more career education and, to reiterate, it develops an articulation program with the technical community colleges because so many young people, and I have worked with disadvantaged young people who don't know and don't understand what the technical college offers. Had they perhaps had a vocational education program and a career education program, they would have been better set to go into a technical college program and really benefit from it. And I think we just have to consider these young people, who for a short period in their life, it is not that they cannot go onto college. It is that they just perhaps cannot as academically, they cannot financially and I think that we need to turn out young people...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR BECK: ...who can interface with the technical college program or who can go to work for a year or two, as many of the children that I know have had to do in order to get more education along those lines, and so I would just support Senator Nelson. I think let's pass this on to Select File. If there are questions about the financing or the appropriation or the use of the money, then let's handle those between now and then. So I just ask you to support this bill at this time.