

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask Senator Warner a question, please. On Section 8, is there anything that we could do as a body to deal with this building on the campus out there? I have been following it a little bit in the newspapers and it seems like it hasn't been handled very well and I was wondering if there was anything that we, as a body, could do rather than to put this funding into that project.

SENATOR WARNER: Well, there...we have had, obviously, two or three meetings with the medical...Senator Pirsch and others, with the university on this whole issue in which a variety of alternatives have been talked about as far as remod...renovating the...structurally, the building so it is safe. I have read some of the articles of conflicting professional opinions, to some extent, although I also understand that there is nowhere that you can get a commitment from a professional person who would back their opinion that the building does not need some remodeling with the kind of guarantee, it's just an opinion without a certification for a period of time. And, obviously, based on some of the comments of some of the structural engineers, the building apparently is far less safe than was originally understood. I...there, I mean, obviously, you...one obvious option I...would be to do nothing, let the facility and the college just go away, I guess.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Another question. If something did happen out there, would the Legislature have to fund, if there was any accident? Or would we be liable or would the State of Nebraska be liable?

SENATOR WARNER: I mean, certainly the State of Nebraska is on notice based on professional judgment of engineering firms that the building has a serious structural, either structural or design fault and I suspect since we're on notice that if we would choose to ignore it and someone was subsequently injured, I would anticipate that certainly there would be claims made of...on the part...on behalf of those people if the state did not act promptly when it became apparent, as it has in the last three months, essentially the last month, to be more exact, how potentially structurally weak the building may be.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you. It just seems like this was handled in a very poor manner. I think that the university should be brought to a task for some of this but I think it was