

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Rogers, discussion on the Hall amendment, followed by Senators Landis and Korshoj.

SENATOR ROGERS: Mr. Speaker and members, I think you can call it a 50 percent increase, I can't disagree with that but yet it's a mighty small amount to try to get some more companies started out in small towns, rural Nebraska. The Revenue Department admitted to us that they didn't have near the action on this bill that they thought they would. Therefore, I can see no reason that we should change...lower it from 1,500 back to the \$1,000. The benefits, I think, well outweigh that \$500 that Senator Hall is trying to take away from us and I would urge for the defeat of his motion.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thanks, Mr. Speaker, and members of the Legislature, there's just some days when you've got to do this stuff, you know it's a long shot but it's the better policy of things so you get up on your feet and make a short speech. I'm in favor of the Hall amendment and it's really appropriate policy, it seems to me. The arguments that we heard in the Revenue Committee were basically that the standards were too high for smaller companies in rural Nebraska to meet. They didn't have large enough payrolls and large enough investments to meet a \$100,000 threshold. The committee understood and I think would have unanimously sent out a bill that simply lowered the threshold but this bill does two things. It lowers the threshold, making more companies' investments qualify and it ups the benefit 50 percent. Interesting thing though, although people scratched their heads and moaned and said, gosh, you know, we haven't given enough money away in this method out in rural Nebraska compared to other places, there was absolutely no evidence before the committee in any survey form or anything else as to why that occurred. No one established what size of companies there were, what kind of growth there was, what kind of benefits existed in other states, nothing that way. It was all in an article of faith and the article of faith was this, you know, we expected there would be more companies to take advantage of this and we're surprised that there hasn't been more growth out there and we need to give away some more money. We haven't given away enough. There was no evidence to justify or to prove that increasing the benefit would increase economic growth, not a lick of it. Now, what these tax credits do are kind of a pat on the back for somebody who makes a sensible,