

SENATOR LYNCH: Thank you, Ron. Mr. President and members, I won't take much more than a minute or two. Just remember this is a teachers bill. It seems to me when we talk about tractors we talk about tractors. We don't think about whether they're in the city or in the county or in the country. When we talk about a lot of other things, we seem to isolate those issues pretty well. Why is it with teachers we make it an urban-rural issue at all? Ron just very adequately explained, for example, the fact that we tried to compromise. Maybe that was our mistake. You know, when you try to sit here and try to satisfy some of the concerns that people had, offer amendments, Senator McFarland, that make me unhappy with the bill, as well, but we have to live in a world of reality politically, and the teachers deserve a lot more than this bill will provide, but I feel obliged to support it simply because this is the best we can do, I think, at this point in time. Two years from now, with or without a sunset, we will be reconsidering this, LB 611, other bills that have to do with aid to education, but this bill, in fact, is a beginning. It does provide something we have done no differently than we have done in the past with special education and five or six other categories of earmarked funds for aid to education that I can see. Don't let this bill become a bill where you want to take it out on the NSEA, you know, that probably more than half of the teachers who work and survive in the smaller school districts don't belong to the association. Whatever benefit will be provided by this bill will go to them. It hasn't got a darn thing to do with who is the advocate for this kind of legislation, either on the floor or behind the glass. It is fair and we can afford it. This priority should take its place with all the other spending issues, and we can discuss how we are going to fund the total package when we consider everything, the recommendations that will come from...

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR LYNCH: ...the Appropriations Committee very quickly, the \$125 million worth of capital expenditures, this \$20 million for teachers, and all the rest. I think it is a fair thing to do. It is an appropriate thing to do. I hate to use the word "moral" but it is the moral thing to do. Teachers need our help. They are great folks. They don't deserve the kicking around they got for whatever reason or justification you might have. Give them some help. Support this LB 89 and allow it to pass on to Final Reading.