

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Yes, I would, Mr. President. I have to assume that since nobody else spoke against this that those are the only people opposing this amendment. One point I want to make clear. Senator Hall indicated the issue of bridges and roads. Senator Hall, under the green copy of the bill, those are already excluded and so my language doesn't exclude those. Those are already out under the current language of the bill. So, in fact, the only things that are excluded are those other items, airports, port facilities, buildings and capital equipment used in the operation of municipal government, convention and tourism facilities, redevelopment projects, mass transit, so on. My rationale for bringing these, as you look at this amount of money and you think about how it might possibly be used, there simply isn't enough money in this bill to address the wide range of things contemplated. And while I am usually one to say send the money out there and let it be controlled by local entities, I don't think I am being inconsistent here in that I am saying there is a big need out there for the kinds of infrastructure items that my amendment would target this money toward and I think it is important that we focus these dollars where the need is greatest. Water treatment facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, in particular, some of our larger cities in this state have done a pretty good job of getting up to speed on that by virtue of essentially, if you will, free money. The federal grants were there and so on. That whole situation is changing and many small communities still have a lot of needs in those areas, unmet needs of millions of dollars that I am not even prepared today to estimate how much, and just at the time that their needs are about to be met, the changing circumstances of the federal government are such that I think it is very unlikely that we are going to get to all of those before some of these larger communities come back in and say, hey, our stuff is starting to wear out again, and so I think that there is probably not a community out there that you can't say doesn't have needs in the areas that I am proposing that we focus the money on. I would further add that local dollars are, as we all know, a lot more scarce than they were just a few years ago, and it is much, much easier in my area to raise money from other sources to do these other things that I am striking from the amendment, but nobody has a bake sale or a lottery or whatever locally to do a wastewater treatment system. It just doesn't have the appeal that it is necessary to do that, and I think you have a lot better chance of finding another source of money to do those