

allow the Games and Parks Commission to take title of Joslyn Castle. Prior to that committee hearing, I appeared before the Games and Parks Commission with the idea of potentially looking at Joslyn Castle as a facility that the Games and Parks could utilize. And at that...at the meeting of the Games and Parks Commission, the commission unanimously approved the project and, in fact, the representative of the Games and Parks Commission was there at the hearing and testified in favor of the bill. Jack Strain apparently was a former member of the Games and Parks Commission and he wrote a letter, a copy of which I have seen, objecting to the Games and Parks taking over the Joslyn Castle as a park. So that is how that happened or those are the facts behind that hearing. At the hearing, the proponents of the Joslyn Castle project appeared, the committee voted unanimously to move LB 164 to the floor and LB 164 is a committee priority bill. In the appropriations process, however, in discussions in committee it became apparent that probably the best route to go at this point in the Joslyn Castle process was to appropriate the needed money for the study in the Department of Economic Development Department of Tourism. So, in fact, the appropriation that Senator Haberman is referring to is an appropriation to the Department of Economic Development. The Joslyn Castle project is a unique project and a project that I've been involved in since I was elected as a state senator for the last...in 1986. Joslyn Castle was deeded to the citizens of the City of Omaha, the school district, in 1944...strike that, it was initially leased to the school district by the Joslyn Foundation in 1944 and subsequently deeded to the school board in later years. In the last couple of years, as at least the Omaha senators will know, the Omaha school district has decided to move its headquarters to a technical high school, leaving Joslyn Castle vacant in the fall of this year. Joslyn Castle is really the last...one of the last if not the last public buildings of its vintage left in the City of Omaha. Those of you may remember the post office, city hall and other structures that were in downtown Omaha that no longer remain. Preservation is an important issue in Omaha. It's an important issue to the State of Nebraska. Looking at other...in Lincoln, for example, the State of Nebraska Historical Society owns the Kennard House, the Ferguson House, there is a Willa Cather House in Red Cloud, the George Norris House in McCook; Games and Parks owns the Buffalo Bill home, Arbor Lodge and the Bowring Ranch in western Nebraska. Omaha does not have a facility anything like Joslyn Castle. Joslyn Castle is a unique architectural structure and the issue of its uniqueness and its historic significance was