

that they are going to reduce their funding because the Department of Defense funds about 25,000 of the \$50,000 branch office out in North Platte. They were going to reduce that 20 percent for the next five years. Obviously, that's a losing scenario and the Appropriations Committee was put into a position of saying, do we want to start replacing lost federal funds when we know with Gramm-Rudman and the deficit we have at the federal level that that is going to become an increasingly severe problem and that's a dangerous precedent to set and they decided not to do that. And that was a reasonable, a very reasonable budgetary decision. However, much has changed since that time and I am not even sure, I know speaking with some of the staff of Appropriations yesterday, they were unaware of the change. The change is that the Department of Defense has come up and said, we're not going to reduce by 20 percent for the next five year, we're going to do, in essence, about the same thing but we're going to do it a little bit differently. We're going to substantially reduce the pool of funds available for Procurement Offices in the United States. Nebraska will be put into eight other...with eight other states, I believe. There will be a number of groups of states in a pool and we will with those states compete by a grant bidding process for those funds. We may obtain all 25,000, we may obtain 10 of the 1,000, we obtain \$1.00. We don't know. We do know that Nebraska has been very, very good in its Procurement Office dealings so our competition...our competitive nature for this date should be very, very good. However, we will not know how much money we will receive, if the office can be continued, until after these decisions are made in this budgetary cycle, thus the amendment. And I have tried to be as reasonable as I can with the budget. I could have come in and said, I think what...we would like to fund it for the two years because this is the biennium because we're not sure if we're going to get any money or not and I chose not to do that because I don't think it makes fiscal sense. What I chose to do is to come up with an amendment asking for \$25,242. I had to chuckle that they ended up needing the \$2.00, but apparently \$25,242, that would fund it for this fiscal year. That money plus the money that is still left with the Department of Defense...with DED and the Procurement Office would allow them to stay open for this fiscal year. It is during this fiscal year that they would be able to find out and know whether or not they will receive any of the matching money or any of the federal money to continue them on for the next year. If they're successful, and we hope that they are successful and to their well-being they must be successful, they