

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Well, yes, I will, Mr. President, and only because coming from...a good distance from this park, one might wonder why I would care one way or the other. But I went out and took the trouble to tour the park. I have lived in both Lincoln and Omaha and one of the things that I have noticed about both of these cities is there is a real need, I think, for more recreational facilities close to the two places. Obviously, we'd like to have you come out and use our state parks in the west and come out and spend your tourism dollars out there, but that isn't realistic unless you have a week or so to spend. And so after touring this facility and looking at the possibilities, particularly for family recreation, I was impressed with the array of activities that are proposed, with the quality that has gone into the planning of this. It is something that I have gone home and talked to my constituents about that if you're ever going to come east, you ought to think very seriously about seeing this park and some of the other attractions down here, like the zoo, like Platte River and so on. There isn't enough back and forth in this state. There isn't enough appreciation by us in the west of what you have in the east and vice versa, and I would agree wholeheartedly with Senator Labeledz's remarks, after looking at this. This is something that is badly needed not only to enhance tourism in the state, which I am convinced it will, but I think it is going to really add something to those people who spend their summers in hot and humid Lincoln and Omaha. You need a place to go and I'm willing to help you build that. I think it's a fine addition to the state's park system and I would urge your support. As far as the cabins, this is a significant sum of money, but the point has been made that there has been a tremendous outpouring of private donations, but the conversations that I've heard are from private donors, that private donors have been more than willing to support this park but, at some point, since they are putting money into a state venture, they'd like to see a little commitment on the part of the state. And so I think, given what has been accomplished out there with private funds, given what this will mean not only to the people of Lincoln and Omaha, but the people of the entire state, then I'm perfectly happy to go ahead and put some state money behind this and complete this park and have a facility for people to enjoy during the spring, summer and fall months. And I guess this is actually supposed to be open year round with the ski runs and so forth, so I think it is well worth supporting. Thank you.