

like to see these funds spread over as broad a base as we possibly could. Without the language, I assume that the department would have the same kind of latitude but could possibly use up the funds in two, three or four projects and we didn't think that that would be the maximum beneficial use to the state as a whole and that's why we have the language there. If you decide you want to remove the language and leave the total discretion up to the department, that's certainly...certainly your prerogative. It was our intention, as a committee, to try to send a signal to the Department of Economic Development. We would like to spread these funds over as broad a base as possible, help as many different towns as we could, as many different businesses and industries as we could and yet leave the language broad enough so that if the department, recognizing that signal, still decided that we needed to concentrate with one company that was making a major investment in employment, they could still do that. That's the purpose of our language. I would prefer to see the language stay there so I will oppose the amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Scofield, please, followed by Senators Coordsen and Crosby.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. President. Senator Hannibal has explained my rationale for proposing this in the first place and the rationale that the committee worked through on this. And I would like to just emphasize that this was not a hastily done activity. It was discussed before the department on a hearing and the department, at the time, said they would not...they didn't encourage us to do a cap but...and that they had not encouraged it but I guess my impression was that they probably wouldn't oppose a cap. Maybe I misread what their intentions were. And so it seems to me that it would...might have been a more proper approach on the part of the department to visit with some of us in the committee who felt strongly that we wanted this to be, as Senator Hannibal said, distributed as broadly as possible across the state and yet I think the language is, in fact, flexible enough that you could conceivably do a \$100,000 for the same company one year and the following year in the fiscal year. So I don't think it is anywhere near as restrictive as some of you who have visited with me regarding information you have received on this as you may be under the impression it is. So I think the main intention here and the important message to send, regardless of whether you decide to accept this amendment, and I would hope you would not, but if