

couldn't do it with borrowed money, they couldn't issue bonds. And those of you that have seen the numbers by cities know that to be a fact. And we talk about it being infrastructure and infrastructure, I'm not sure what that means anymore but there certainly are some items in there that are not infrastructure, without any question they are not infrastructure by any definition. And there isn't a doubt in my mind that that's what in some cases that will be used for, not infrastructure but things totally different, which may be fine but you should understand what it does. I would hope that you would leave this option here so there is a choice between whether you tie up the revenue for 20 years or you maintain some flexibility for the state through aid programs that exist.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Schellpeper, please.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, I rise to support Senator Landis's amendment to pull this out of 525. He mentioned that Omaha and Lincoln are supporting this. The small towns are also supporting it. They want to have something that they can look at down the road for 20 years and not have to worry about the Legislature cutting them out every year or having it one year and then not having it the next. The MIRF bill is the only way to do that. I think it's been designed so that they can build, they can bond, they can do things for their cities that will help them, not just this year, next year but for 20 years. Our small towns need this. We need to have something out there that will help them, not just this year but for the next 20 years and the MIRF bill will do that. So I would urge that you support the amendment by Senator Landis to take this out of 525. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Scofield, please, followed by Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Mr. President and members, I have supported the MIRF bill, as you know, and I have voted to pull it out of committee and I have moved it along out of concern for the future of small towns. But I am also going to ask you for now to reject this amendment. And the reason for that is found in a letter that I circulated to you yesterday about an amendment that I raised on MIRF the last time around that I still think is a very important policy choice that we need to take up. As you will recall, my amendment talks about looking at a formula that a needs based formula when you allocate this cigarette tax money