

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Rod Johnson, please, followed by Senator Hefner and Senator Schimek, Senator Schmit, and Senator Morrissey. Senator Rod Johnson.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Mr. President, and members, I will make my comments very brief.

PRESIDENT: Excuse me a second, Senator Johnson. (Gavel.) Could we hold it down a little bit so we can hear the speakers a little better. Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, I don't have a lot of problems with Senator Morrissey's concept. I know in the discussions that the group had in our compromise meetings, there was a lot of discussion about whether we should expand the base, if you will, of financial support, and we really never came to a figure or an exact dollar amount on how to do that. Obviously, yes, I would like to see the bigger the base, the more financial revenue that will come in to support the program, and so I tend to be somewhat supportive of what Senator Morrissey is raising here. He also covers another point in this amendment that was also discussed and that was the research that some of the senators wanted to have for waste reduction and also waste energy kinds of concepts, and he has covered that in this amendment as well. So, generally, I am in support of the amendment at first glance. The question I guess is, can we get 1.5 million out of the General Fund; and, number two, does it mean that this plan that has to be devised will hold up the other funds that are being collected by the tire and business fee? The question I have is, does this plan have to be done before any grants can be allocated to the political subdivisions? That is one of the other concerns that I guess I have at this point but, in general, I kind of support the idea. I think the broader the base, the better it is for the fund, and, hopefully, the more communities that will have an opportunity to participate in the program.

PRESIDENT: Senator Hefner, please.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President, and members of the body, I rise to support Senator Morrissey's amendment. I think that we do need more money in the fund, and I think it is a responsibility of all citizens in Nebraska to help us address this problem. By taking this money out of the General Fund, it will help it and all citizens would help pay for it. And I realize at the