

state. And this particular bill, companioned with the other legislation, will help Western Community College and the other ones who need the levy equalized. I won't talk to the technical side of it because Senator Weihing explained that so ably. So I urge you to vote for this bill and move it along and help those people in areas of the state that maybe it isn't so easy to get to the educational centers and help them to help us to continue and strengthen the accessibility to that education. Community colleges, to me, are one of the really strong parts of our educational system in this State of Nebraska and we need to continue to help them to continue to do what they do to strengthen their programs and to strengthen the accessibility. I'm going to use that word again because I think this is what this whole discussion on these three pieces of legislation is, is accessibility to that education. So I urge you to vote green on LB 1050. Thank you.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Thank you. Senator Dierks, please.

SENATOR DIERKS: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I had the good fortune of being...of serving as a Chair of the Education Committee at the time this legislation was heard. And, in the absence of Senator Withem, why we did hear some, I think, excellent testimony from people all across the State of Nebraska but especially from people in western Nebraska. And the evidence was very overwhelming, as far as I'm concerned, the testimony was overwhelming concerning the necessity of this legislation. There is a very real probability that if we do not pass this legislation and that lawsuit is successful, we would find ourselves in a special session to deal with the problem out there. If that lawsuit is successful, the people in western Nebraska will be digging up millions of dollars to pay back as a result of that lawsuit. I think it is extremely necessary that we look favorably on this legislation. We felt strongly enough about it in committee that we put it out of committee the very day that we heard it. We knew that it was Senator Weihing's priority and we felt that it would be an opportunity to get this up before us and have a good discussion on it. I would urge that you support this legislation. Thank you.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Thank you, Senator Dierks. Senator Nelson, please.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I am going to be one of those voting green for this and that's for sure. I