

that the bill may not be able to make it on the floor with the time we have remaining, so we offered to try it as an amendment at this particular point. What it would, in essence, do and it is a very simple amendment, what it would, in essence, do is last year the Legislature passed the education technology bill which set up education technology in the State of Nebraska in Lincoln. Much of the funding, however, was vetoed out of the bill and so next year the Legislature will have to go back and look at that part. This is not dealing with that part of the funding. What was approached to me by people in the rural parts of the State of Nebraska is that it is very difficult for the teachers during the time period of their teaching when they are trying to get things done to actually come into Lincoln and take advantage of what is here. So the idea approached that we need to have satellite centers in rural Nebraska so that all Nebraskans can participate in what we have in the educational technology here in Lincoln. We've been working with the Department of Education, we've been working with the educational technology group and they've worked together to come up with this particular bill which is now the amendment and, in essence, what it would do, financially it would put two satellite areas in the western part of the state. The locations were picked simply because the fiber optics is already there and when you're looking at the communications, when you're looking at the future of technology you need that two-way fiber optics in order to accomplish the goals of communicating between the eastern and western parts of the state as efficiently as possible in regards to the technology available. It would take two people, one person in each side in a half-time FTE, at the educational technology area and, hopefully, more funding would be available next year but that is up for the Legislature, the Appropriations Committee and whatever we do on the biennial budget. But it would set aside two areas and I can tell you that in both of those particular areas there is funding available from that local areas, from foundation, what have you, that can get them well on the way so we can be taking advantage of the same technology that is available in the eastern part of the state.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Crosby, you're next, but may I introduce one guest. Senator Wehrbein has a cousin over under the south balcony, Joan Janzen. Would you please stand, Joan. I understand this is Senator Wehrbein's only cousin. Well, I guess you can't always believe what he tells you. Thank you for visiting us today anyway. Senator Crosby, please, followed by Senator Chizek.