

handout which, basically, highlights what other states are doing, in particular the Midwest, and I hope that you'll get a chance to read that, but I wanted to make note that there...I think in the early eighties there were only about 20 states that had foreign trade offices and from that point forward we've seen actually quite an aggressive activity by many states to get involved in this. And the question I raised before the Government Committee, and I've raised to the many press people who have asked me about this bill, is that if Nebraska chooses not to promote itself and its people and its industries and its businesses and its farmers, who is going to do it for us? I see this as an opportunity to get back into the business of international trade. We clearly live in a global economy and I think it's time that Nebraska be a participant, an active, aggressive player in that global economy and this bill would help us do that by establishing an International Trade Office and Division, and hopefully we can give it some clear guidance and hopefully we'll be able to work to secure new opportunities for Nebraska businesses that they currently do not have. Now, granted, most of your large, major corporations like ConAgra, for example, probably don't need this bill, but I think there are an awful lot of smaller, mid-size businesses who don't have the staff or the opportunities that maybe our major corporations will have that could use this business, that could help us or use this trade office, that could use the personnel, could hopefully understand the customs and the policies of a country in which we may locate this office. This bill does not designate where to locate the office. Hopefully we'll have some say in that, but we're not itemizing where we're going to put this. Obviously, I'm a little more interested in what is happening in eastern Europe than other areas, but I have not said this is the only place that we're going to locate this particular office. We may want to put it someplace else. Now, most of the western states, in a book that I just got, most of them locate their international trade offices, of the 17 western states, in what they call the Asia-Pacific rim, although there are states that are looking at Europe and Mexico as well, but you know, as I see it, we're missing an opportunity that we should be involved in and this bill I think will help us get to that point. Now, one of the questions that was raised to me the other day was the cost and some people have been asking about that. The fiscal note, I believe, has somewhere, something close to \$500,000. If you look at the A bill that accompanies this bill, we've lowered that cost down to about \$300,000, so, yes, it's a large amount of money, especially in a tight fiscal