

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Mr. Speaker and members, thank you very much. I wonder if Senator Schmit might respond to a question.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Schmit, would you respond?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Yes, I'll...

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Senator Schmit, I don't believe you and I have ever talked about this amendment before, is that correct?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Well, I don't know...

SENATOR SCOFIELD: At least not directly in terms of your requesting to add this to the bill.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...that...I don't think we have discussed it one-on-one, Senator. I've explained it on the floor...

SENATOR SCOFIELD: This is my time, Senator Schmit, please just respond. Did I know this amendment was coming?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Absolutely not.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you. Can you tell me how far Omaha is from Mead?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thirty miles.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: And how far is Lincoln from Mead?

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thirty miles.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you. I don't really have anything against the Mead project. It's...I'm sure it's a worthwhile project, and yet I have to express some concern about having this added on to this 898 bill, partly because there is a sense, not just in the Panhandle, but I think throughout most of rural Nebraska that there has been an awful lot of attention paid to issues that pretty much relate to Lincoln and Omaha. Now, we don't want to further any further splits in the state, but quite frankly from the perspective I think of even somebody who lived in Grand Island, Mead is darned near in the backyard of Omaha and Lincoln. And, frankly, Trailside is a good distance from that. And it concerns me that there is a distinction between these two projects. The reason Trailside is back in there this