

perhaps those decisions that are further removed from the...from those local communities. There is a complicated series of steps that have to be walked through that is before you in the form of LB 1229 which has been carefully worked out over the years and so I would suggest that this is an appropriate thing to do, in fact, it's an essential thing to do if we are to give these communities a chance to survive and to prosper and to compete and I would also suggest that we are, in fact, all interlocked, linked together, if you will. Our destinies in this state are linked together and for these small communities who will be the first beneficiaries of this to be able to prosper, it's simply going to translate into wealth into the areas of predominantly Lincoln and Omaha, as those are our major trade areas that we see people coming into. Further, if, as we expect, federal funds continue to go away, I think it's very likely that Lincoln and Omaha will be glad we have these kinds of tools themselves and, in fact, there are a good many cities currently able to carry out activities because they happen to get there in time to get federal funds and they are working successfully and they are doing good things for those communities. But I think if we want to give our communities a future, and if we want to keep some of these small towns alive and give them a chance at survival, this is a tool we have to give them, and with that, I would ask you to advance this bill.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Wesely, please.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President and members, I understand the sincere desire of providing assistance again to the small towns of the state. I, again, emphasize to you that I think ultimately they will not be the winners under the bills, they will be the losers, that the larger towns will benefit more than the smaller towns because of the breadth and depth of their resources and in a competition those resources will prevail, I believe. One of the concerns I had about the bill, and I've had a little bit of an answer here is that potentially could be used for retail type activity. And just as an example of where this would cause problems. I understand 1229 did not provide for retail businesses receiving assistance, though the constitutional amendment would not restrict that. But the breadth of the constitutional amendment would allow perhaps the possibility of a local town putting money into retail and the concern I have, for instance, is when a Lincoln decides they want to expand in retail, then the surrounding towns, the smaller towns lose business into Lincoln and a Grand Island