

SENATOR MOORE: You know...time? I'm done.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Moore. I will give you the speaking order again, Senator Chambers, Senator Hefner, Senator Bernard-Stevens, Schmit, Pirsch, Will, Robinson, Warner, Horgan, Rasmussen, Withem and Dierks. Senator Chambers. We will go to Senator Hefner.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I am not quite that wound up as Senator Moore is but I guess, Senator Rasmussen, I oppose your bill. I don't know exactly what is all in this bill. I am not on the Education Committee. I think it is a fairly good bill but how are we going to fund it? And we have a lot of good programs coming down the pike. I could mention dozens of them and I realize that...in fact, I had a person in my office this morning pleading for me to support the extra tax on pop so that money could go for the regions, for the handicapped people. And so we have a lot of places we could spend that money. Senator Lamb wants a railroad, wants the state to buy a railroad from Norfolk to Chadron, and he wants to use some of the Highway Trust Fund money. Special ed needs more money and I could go on and on, and we are just going to have to say no to some of these good programs. But I want to talk more about the financing of this bill, using our Highway Trust Funds. I live in a rural area and we have been battling and battling and battling for better highways and better roads. In fact, Senator Rasmussen, sometimes when we have a snowstorm up in northeast Nebraska, it is two, or three, or four, or five days before we even get the roads open because these highways were built 40, 50 years ago, and we are making progress to get them improved, we are cutting down the banks so they won't block as easily. But I don't think that we should take it out of the Highway Trust Fund. Senator Rasmussen lives in Omaha, and we are spending a lot of money to redo the interstate system, not only in Omaha, but across the state. It is taking a lot of bucks. One million dollars or \$14 million doesn't go too far when you are rebuilding the interstate system. So I would say let's keep the sales tax, let's keep the gasoline and special fuels tax, and let's keep the registration fees in the Highway Trust Fund, where it will benefit not only to build the highways, but it will take care of our county roads, our bridges. We have a lot of bridges that are just unsafe and we need to replace them. Also, it will help build the streets in our towns, and so I would urge you to oppose bringing this bill or raising this bill out of committee. Thank you.