

done by some railroad experts. They tell us that the impacts of closing the line from Norfolk to Chadron can be in the neighborhood of \$112 million over a 25-year period. Those impacts are in terms of additional wear and tear on the roads. They're in terms of lost revenues to producers of commodities that are shipped on the railroads. They are in terms of additional costs for products that are shipped in on the railroads; significant impacts if this line is closed. Those kinds of impacts would also accrue if other short lines or light density lines are closed. The bill, 783, sets up a mechanism, as Senator Lamb indicated, for evaluating these light density lines, making a businesslike decision as to whether or not either the revitalization should be supported or some other outright support is necessary in order to keep them operating. Originally, when this bill was introduced to the Legislature, it contained a provision for a \$20 million appropriation of funds from the Highway Trust Fund. Senator Kristensen has an amendment to strike that provision. When we come to that, he will find that Senator Lamb and myself and the other sponsors of the bill support that amendment. Negotiations have been ongoing with the Chicago Northwestern Railroad and, as you will note, we have amended the A bill that is attached to this so that we are only asking for \$1,260 in General Fund appropriation. It may sound a little bit astonishing to have reduced the potential dollars requested from \$20 million to \$1,260, however, I can tell you that on a basis of the negotiations that are going forward that is not an impossible result. Primarily, what I would ask the body at this time is that we be able to advance 283...or 783 so that we may consider it on Select File if it is necessary to come back and ask for additional funds above and beyond the 1,260. But it is necessary to advance the bill so that we can continue the negotiation process and bring...and bring to the body a package that we can fully describe to you. With that, I would have no further remarks, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. We do have an amendment to the bill. Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Kristensen would move to amend. That amendment is found on page 1063 of the Journal.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members of the body, the Transportation Committee listened to LB 783 for many,