

or what sorts of things can you...can you help me with on that policy that I think we need to answer at least sometime before the bill reaches final passage in that area?

SENATOR LAMB: Well, with the acceptance of your amendment, Senator, there is only \$1,280 in the bill and that's not partially at least fund the commission that would be set up. Those big numbers are not going to happen, you know, we have control of that. We are just not going to vote those big numbers. What we are doing is setting up a procedure whereby a group of people that are interested in Nebraska can look at the viability of a line and say, look, if that can be operated by another group in some manner, let's give them the help that they can be...that we can, and it is not our intent to get into the railroad business. And we certainly can't do anything for \$1,280. The only thing we can do is set up a mechanism for those situations, whether it's your district...and this applies to the whole state, we're talking primarily now about the Chicago Northwestern because that's the one that's threatened. But this commission will look at every railroad and see if it's viable. And I don't think there is any incentive here for railroads to make that line less profitable because they don't know...they don't know what this group is going to do. This group that controls this situation is not going to do anything that is not in the best interest of the state, is not good business policy. So I see, right now, this bill poses no risk. It does many of the things that are done in other states and...but we do need the vehicle in case there is some sort of an agreement and funding from some other source.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Lamb. Senator Morrissey.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members. I have been on both sides of this issue. I...at present, I would agree, I think we need to move this bill ahead. We have a line that we're speaking about that is very unique. I can think of no other line in the state that would be considered for abandonment that serves as large an area as this line. Senator Coordsen has some area down in his district but this goes clear across the northern half of the state. It's very, very unique. The question of giving the railroad companies incentive to abandon lines in the future, downsize, downgrade because they know the state will then step in, Senator Lamb hit that nail pretty well on the head. They do it now. They have traditionally done it. I had a branch line that ran from