

that it will be simply part of the division of the monies that we collect under the provisions of LB 1059. With that, I would be happy to answer any questions if there are. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Speaker Baack. I will now recognize senators wishing to speak to this amendment. Senator Moore.

SENATOR MOORE: Yes, Madam President, I rise to support Senator Baack's amendment to 719. I feel that this amendment we put a little more certainty back into the funding stream for this whole process. Obviously a couple of years ago when this Legislature initially passed the choice bill and the concept that it entailed, there was...at that time there was a best guess on what it would cost the state and activity since that time has basically indicated that best guess was just exactly that, a guess, and it was wrong, and since that time the cost of this program has increased almost twice what we initially thought it was going to be. And the way it reads right now, or to date, the present year we're in right now as the State of Nebraska, back when we passed the bill two years ago we appropriated \$976,000 to the choice, to pay for the choice bill. Well since that time that was intended to pay for everybody. Well since that time it's...actually the cost is about double that. I think it's a little more than double that, if I remember correctly. And this next year, assuming whenever the Appropriations Committee and this Legislature decide to fund and what level we choose to fund it at, obviously we should continue the present funding level of \$976,000. The next year we'll be short and as Senator Baack already mentioned, we will prorate that expense back to individual people and they will not get their full cost of choice. I think with Senator Baack's amendment, you know, after this year we finally put into statute and to a formula where people will know exactly what it is they are going to get when they participate in choice, both from the individual level and from the school district level. It is part of our formula in the State of Nebraska. We do not have to come in every year and guess what it is going to be. It simply is going to be automatic after that. And so if you do not endorse Senator Baack's amendment, obviously the other alternative you have then is, then in years to come we have to plug in a number in our process of what exactly choice is going to be and that number is going to be a lot, to begin with this next year it's going to be a lot more than we thought it was going to be. You're looking at a couple of million dollars. And, too, in