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PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Yes, members of the body, I guess we start down this long row of budget amendments and I'm speaking to what was originally LB 542. I think it was within about two bills of being heard earlier in the session and then when we went on to the priority bills, of course, it remained in that status. What LB 542 actually would do is repeals the statute that we passed a couple of years ago, LB 408, and I find the only way to get rid of a program here and as Senator Moore said, we do need to address our budget and we need to assess the programs that we are...that we currently have. And I guess that I was not...I was very cautious when this program was initiated so, frankly, I probably had my eye on it a little closer than some of the others when it was originally passed. There were only 34 votes in support and 6 didn't vote and 8 against, so that tells you that there were questions. I don't think that we have a program here that cannot be justified to some extent excepting, as I say, we need to reallocate our expenditures and not necessarily increase funding just what we have and use it a little bit more wisely. As I say, the goals of the academy were admirable. They were to help youth at risk and who can argue with that? But I'm not here to nitpick a program, but too often we senators do not follow up with a program that we may pass and just assume that whatever agency we've turned it over to and so on is going to follow our wishes and spend our money wisely. I questioned four students. There were 67 students that participated in the conference. It was supposed to be 2 from each legislative district and I really don't know why there were not the full 98 students involved, but I questioned 2, 2 from Lincoln and 2 from Grand Island. I'll try to make this as fast as I can and asked them what they got out of it or what their involvement was and so on. One of them, my question was, what did you get out of it? Not really, I didn't learn that much. Just had a bunch of printed materials thrown at us with no follow-up was another comment. Have you done anything since then? All answers were no. One said, or two or three of them I believe, I think I got one or two letters. One of the letters was offering them to attend the New Horizon project that we had in Grand Island in October and then one was, I think, giving somewhat the accomplishments or the names of some of them. Here's the very sophisticated fancy book that was printed that went out, some pretty good pictures of the senators, the biographies of,