

SENATOR SCHIMEK: I think that would be better than totally eliminating the program. So once again, Senator Nelson, you've brought us an important issue. I'm glad you brought it but I can't quite agree with you that we need to dispense with it entirely. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Schimek. The speaking order now is Senator Smith, Robak, Nelson, Wehrbein, Hefner, Robinson and Moore. Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Madam President and members of the body, I stand and support Senator Nelson's amendment to LB 843. As a member of the Government Affairs Committee, I, too, sat in on the hearing on this bill and Senator Schimek has made some very valid points about the value of this for young people, but I think you should remember that what we're talking about when we talk about how young people have benefitted, we're talking about 67 young people at a cost of \$103,000 approximately for a few days at a...out in Kearney or wherever it was at. And the information that was provided to us in that hearing very, very specifically told us that the money was spent in a very extravagant to put it, in my mind, mildly, it was extravagant, the fashion that they used the money to take care of those kids out there and there's nothing wrong with those kids having a good time. And you have a letter from a young person who felt they benefitted from it, but I think that some of the other groups that we had that provide the same kinds of opportunities, we had some young people that came to testify. They talked about Youth Government Day. They discussed the fact that they had 200 young people in this one conference and I think the conference cost them like a thous... I don't know what it was, the total expenditures was \$1,275. That's an example of the cost for that one. There also would be ongoing kinds of things throughout the youth of these young people and with them. When we questioned the people that were heading this program, we asked what else did you do with the money? And if you're thinking that this money that we allocated went throughout the year for these young people to be participants, I think you should look again because we were told that well we do such things as newsletters and I asked, how many newsletters have you put out? Well, one. And the young people themselves have not been followed up with. There has been no further contact with them. So I think at a time when we're talking here, and there are other examples that Senator Hefner has brought out to us,