

on behalf of Senator Lynch would have put some intent language into the appropriations bill to provide that certain salary allocations be made to the separate campuses, UNO, University of Nebraska at Kearney and UNL. That amendment brought up an issue to the forefront which I think needs to be discussed today to some degree and that's the issue of university salaries. This amendment would increase the budget for the University of Nebraska salaries by \$3 million. And as we discussed this issue in the Appropriations Committee, both from the taking the Governor's budget and then putting together our budget, listening to the testimony from the various institutions, from the University of Nebraska system, as well as the individual campuses, it became somewhat clear to me that the number that would be needed to bring the campuses up to the basic minimum of salary level to handle the various increases across the board would be a figure of \$3 million. And this is the amount that this amendment calls for. As you may recall, in the last...over the last four years the State of Nebraska has made a significant commitment to the university system and by doing so has increased salary or funding for salaries at the University of Nebraska by substantial percentages. And I supported those increases, as did most of the people in this body, realizing that our university system is central, both to our...the purpose of educating, for the purpose of educating our young people and also for enhancing opportunities for economic development, both in the nonagricultural and agricultural sector. We have put forward a research initiative of 12 million...which has been funded up to the \$12 million level, a research initiative which has been, I think, significantly important to our state. It has attracted a number of highly qualified professionals to the University of Nebraska, both at the Med Center and UNL, and to some degree the other campuses. I feel that it is important that we send a message to both...to the university system as well as to the citizens across the State of Nebraska that in these years of difficult funding times that we will not sell the university system short, that we will keep the funding level at a reasonable...at a reasonable level so that, first of all, so that we won't lose the progress that we have made, so that we will also, hopefully, attract and continue to attract the kind of professionals that we have been attracting in the last four years. I know, personally, in my experience in dealing with the Medical Center and the number of grants that the University of Nebraska Medical Center has brought into the State of Nebraska and the total number of dollars leveraged off of that research money is absolutely significant. And as I go across and talk to