

operational cuts need to be made to adhere to the budget, that we're going to see a lot of state programs and state services harmed to some degree and I'm sure that we're going to see a lot of problems on the local level. We've got the lid proposals and other matters that we're looking at with personal property and other questions and so I'm not saying that the local subdivisions aren't suffering as well. But, clearly, in terms of overall balance it would appear that where we have tried to be fairly evenhanded on state aid versus state operations, in this case there is a surge ahead by state aid and the result of 1059. So I would like to see a little bit more into the state operations side of the budget and this sort of salary issue certainly cuts...cuts into that with the problems we've had with retention of faculty and the changes over the last few years that improvements have been made certainly have been beneficial. So I would like to keep that going and would support the Ashford amendment. But I guess I'm suggesting we be ever vigilant that we don't harm our state agencies and state operations, state programs, state services as we proceed to work through any budget, not just this one but any year. It's a classic struggle in this body; coming from Lincoln, I have to be concerned about state operations, state government; coming from elsewhere, being particularly the head of the Education Committee, you need to be concerned about state aid to education. State aid is very important, obviously, as well. And you have that struggle, constant tension, constant clash of priorities but that's the democratic process, that's the legislative process, and trying to work through that is what we're attempting at this point and it seems to me not to be an act of imbalancing but, in fact, an act of balancing the budgets in this area to move forward and increase this support for teacher...for the university faculty under the proposals offered by Senator Ashford.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Madam President and members, I simply want to say I rise to oppose the Ashford amendment. I think we've spent sufficient time in committee to iron out a really fair and equitable budget for the university and higher education in Nebraska. I am not inclined to fiddle with this at this time and I urge you to reject it. We...we do have a fairly fine-tuned budget, as we are, and I think if we can continue along the way we've been going that we will be much better served with our time over the next few days if we can pretty well accept the budget as it is and maybe with some fine-tuning.