

go. They are saying that if the appropriation is invalid that, indeed, we would have a requirement of \$3 million in General Funds in this current fiscal year in the event the package was put together and, of course, we spent the \$3 million. It would be appropriate I would think then in the second year to come in with a deficit appropriation and make that up, but we are, obviously, talking about several contingencies there and no one is willing to make, I think, a firm commitment as to what would happen. The first contingency is that the Attorney General or someone else would say, no, you can't take the money out of the cash reserve because of the particular language in the bill. Secondly, the contingency is that the money got spent at all before the beginning of the next fiscal year, and your ability to make up that deficit. So there are still unknowns, and I cannot give you any more assurances than that. Regardless of how this rather complicated discussion of funding works itself out, the fact of the matter is, and I continue to believe it quite strongly, that the legislation, as a matter of policy and as a matter of effort to save a very significant part...

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: ...of the transportation infrastructure for the State of Nebraska makes sense. And I cannot I think reemphasize that point enough. We simply cannot, I think, willy-nilly, abandon, or give up on what is a major part of the rail transportation system in this state. Other states have confronted this issue in a similar manner. They have not abandoned their short line railroads. South Dakota has made every effort to preserve their rail infrastructure. Iowa has made every effort to maintain their rail infrastructure, for example, and they have been quite successful in doing it. It seems as though Nebraska is the only one who, in the region, may be ignoring this opportunity and simply let things slip through their fingers and slide away into the night.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. I will remind the senators that we are on Final Reading, so the house is under call. Would the senators please return to their seats so we can proceed with the vote. Senator Ashford.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Could the senators check in, Madam President?

PRESIDENT MOUL: Okay, would the senators please check in? We are looking for Senators Lynch, Hefner, Wickersham, Schimek,