

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Lynch.

SENATOR LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, and members, I meant to pass this out, and I didn't, I apologize. In Nebraska there are a number of communities that have mass transit systems, some are more involved and complicated and bigger than others, but nevertheless they do exist. If we treated...this is another one of those equity issues, but I got to tell you about it so you'll understand, and some day we'll overcome all these things and I won't be standing up here, somebody else with the same concern. But if we treated, in Nebraska, all mass transit systems the same, and that means that if we in fact gave them all, in the form of aid or subsidy, 50 percent of their deficit, we would have to come up with \$5,702,258. Well, right now, available from the Highway Trust Fund is \$1 million to serve that need. How it works is simple. Everybody in the state does get, in fact, 50 percent of their subsidy, whatever that amount. And whatever is left is given in proportion to Lincoln and to Omaha. When we were in the Appropriations Committee we discussed this, and I was grateful that the Appropriations Committee put this in the mainline budget...I mean in the mainline budget. If you'll...when you get a chance to look at that paper I gave you, it's front and back cover. But there were a couple, three options we offered. As you'll see under the current distribution, the top left-hand side, of the million dollars Lincoln and Omaha get 6.4 percent, and 100 percent goes to the rest, that 100 percent represents 50 percent of their subsidy. I've got no problem with that, I really don't. We didn't want to interfere with that. But if you look at the column next to that, at the top, it says new distribution, if we did get equal representation of it, not representing 50 percent, but equal representation, you could see what Douglas County and the City of Lincoln could ask for. But we didn't do that either. What we...what we asked for was that we use option number two. And what that simply did was increase from the General Fund so that we wouldn't use the sacred Highway Trust Fund money, \$500,000, probably should have, but we didn't. And I still think we should in some cases, some day. What it simply did was provide with that \$500,000, 16.5 percent for Omaha, and 16.5 percent for Lincoln towards that 50 percent of their subsidy. Equity issue? It only applies to Omaha and to Lincoln. It doesn't meet the need, and still is grossly unfair. I don't know why we capped the aid at 1 million, maybe some veterans around here who did this can tell us some time so we can understand why. But I do