

SENATOR ROBAK: Thank you, Madam President. Madam President and members, I oppose Senator Hefner's amendment. I see no reason for this Youth Leadership Academy to be put in statute. If you want to continue the Youth Leadership Academy, perhaps you could find some other ways to fund it besides the Legislature, not only the funding, but it shouldn't be in statute anymore than Brownies, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, YMCA, Sunshine Girls, Campfire Girls, 4-H Clubs, and boys and girls soccer teams. I think that we are short of money, and even though you have scaled it down somewhat, there is still things out there that I would like to see funded that would help with the general student, even the student at risk. Although I hate to label students, I think the automated library project which failed last year, and it is going to be up again this year, but we don't look like we have enough money for that. Frankly, I think that would help the at-risk student more than this program would. I heard the...I was on the committee that heard this bill originally in its original form, and we have some good testimony from some boys from the Nebraska Conference of Youth, and they made a comparison of the first year. I realize that this is scaled down somewhat, but they have, let's see, how many they had? In 1989, the registration was only \$80 and that was for 550 youth. They spent \$31,000, and the first year we spent, our program was \$130,000 for 65 youth. And I realize that you are scaling this down somewhat but I still object to it. I think we need to get rid of this program entirely. I don't think it should be...I don't think it should be set in statute and funded by the Legislature. I think if that opens doors to, as I said, Brownies and Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts can also be set in statute, we should give them the same amount of money. I also hate to label students at risk. And I think the schools should be aware of the students that are at risk and help them from that point; that point, they should help the students that are at risk, and not leave it up to the Legislature to have some fun club that they go to every year. I oppose Senator Hefner's amendment, and I support Senator Nelson's bill to eliminate the Youth Leadership Academy. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Robak. Senator Hefner. Okay, Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Madam President and members. I am going to support the Hefner amendment. I am a little confused about this whole discussion and what I am going to talk about