

January 17, 1992 LB 542

SENATOR HALL: And if I remember right, the original budget, first year it was in place, was approximately \$90,000, is that correct?

SENATOR HEFNER: Yes, it was quite a little. I don't know if that was it exactly.

SENATOR HALL: So it has been cut back down to approximately...thank you, Senator Hefner, I appreciate that.

SENATOR HEFNER: Yes, I don't think we need to spend \$100,000.

SENATOR HALL: No, neither do I, I think the 30,000, but based on some of the comments, I thought maybe I was reading it wrong. It was 2.7 million or something like that because we are talking about how important and what an effect this was going to have on the budget. Frankly, \$30,000 is a fairly small amount when you are looking at, I guess, a \$3.2 billion budget. The effect that it may or may not have on kids I think probably depends as much on the kids as it does on the program, but if you don't fund the program to some extent, \$30,000, I think is an adequate amount. I agree with Senator Hefner, I think it is an amendment that we can live with. I think that to argue that this is some kind of salvation for the budget or that we need to discontinue this program because it doesn't serve a lot of people, I guess there are examples throughout the budget where we can show that very few people are served by an extremely large amount of dollars. And I think that the folks that do benefit from this proposal, I mean when we...you know, you look at costs, I will use Curtis as an example. I think we had one example where, you know, our costs in terms of the number of students at Curtis, you know, ranged in the \$35,000 and up area. We are talking about whether there be 50 or 100 students who have attended, currently do or have attended in the past this program, we are talking about spending \$30,000 to give them an experience that will impact their life probably far into the future. I think that is well worth the expenditure. It is part of what state government is all about. It is not just building bridges and paving roads and providing universities and things like that. Little things like this have a far greater impact on the kind of people you have in your state than whether or not you pave that last mile of road. I think this 30,000 is probably far well spent, far better spent than the last mile of pavement that we put on any highway out there that probably costs us clearly into seven figures. Thirty