

this is the time to bite the bullet. That is almost my closing. Do you have other lights on?

PRESIDENT MOUL: No, Senator Nelson, but we are addressing the Hefner amendment right now. Does anyone else wish to address the Hefner amendment? Seeing none, do you have closing, Senator Hefner?

SENATOR HEFNER: Madam President, members of the body, one more year, one more year, I am happy with that because I think that we do need to be accountable, but I think we need to give this program an opportunity to work. It worked a lot better this last year than it did the previous year. I realize that we had an Executive Director of the Research Department that wasn't too capable two years ago, or I didn't think he was anyway, and the program was a disaster, and I didn't like that. We spent a lot of tax dollar very foolishly, but I thought this past year we did do a lot of good. Our Executive Director was just new, the Exec Board had just hired her, so she didn't have an opportunity to work very long on the program, and so I think we need to give her and her staff a little more time. And I am not saying that this is the way we should do it, but I think as the Exec Board meets, we can mull it over again. Senator Schimek and I are both on the Exec Board and I know, and Senator Chambers is on the Exec Board, and I know that we can make this program work if we are given a chance. Thirty thousand dollars for this program is not that much, but it gives to those students that don't have an opportunity in some of these other programs, it gives them an opportunity to perhaps become some of our future leaders in years to come. They are the students that are not in the top rung of their class. They are the students that are perhaps a little more shy, but they do need some encouragement. I was very, very happy with some of the responses that I got this past year, especially from that mother, and also from a school teacher, and I think that we can work with our state colleges and community colleges, our university, and make this a good program. The first year I think we had about 98 students that came to this event. Last year, I realize we only had 58 students, but we didn't quite have enough time to get the program going and some of the senators didn't respond as quickly as they should have. But let's give it one more year and go from there, so I would urge you to support Senator Schimek's and my amendment and let the Exec Board handle it from there. Thank you.