

that the public has not been benefiting from expanded government, but many services are being provided in an efficient and diligent manner, but I wonder if all these services are fundamental to the basic function of state government. You will see in the amendment that the Department of Economic Development is eliminated. I have no axe to grind with the DED. It has done some fine work for the citizens of Nebraska but are its activities a fundamental function of government? In the Legislative Council budget personal staff is reduced and the Research Division and Ombudsman are eliminated. I feel that we have outstanding people on staff here and in the Research Division and I can tell you that I have relied heavily on the fine staff in the Ombudsman's office. But, again, I feel that these positions represent a growth of service that may or may not be fundamental to the basic function of the Legislative Council. You will see that the university and the state colleges absorb a 5 percent cut in this amendment. Will higher education suffer as a result? I doubt it. It might, but it will go on and state government will go on. It will not grind to a halt if you adopt the reductions in the budget. The specific reductions stated as a percentage are listed on pages 10 through 14 and they will total roughly \$53 million. We will then fund another 40 million in operations by using 10 percent of the Highway Trust Fund, 10 percent of the Highway Trust Fund, \$40 million. I know this will send shock waves through the body because the Highway Trust Fund is considered a sacred cow, but, here again, we are clinging to a supposedly meritorious status quo. If we are reducing many public services by 5, 10 or 15 percent, why not highway construction and maintenance? If we are to examine the entire tax system, the motor fuels tax should be included. You will also notice that Game and Parks user fees are doubled, \$20 for an annual permit, \$4 for a temporary permit. This will fund a \$2.5 million reduction in funding to Game and Parks. You will also notice that the reductions focus on administration and operations and try to avoid cutting aid to individuals and to political subdivisions. In other words, this amendment does not seek to pass the buck and have these expenditures picked up at the local level. It's an honest attempt to reduce operations, reduce bureaucracy and reduce the total tax burden on Nebraskans. Before you dismiss this proposal as invalid or label it a disruptive or nonproductive item, please consider this. This may be the only legislation we can pass to accompany the constitutional amendment which will in turn prompt the voters to approve the CA. Any other proposal we offer will ask the public