

budget it has been a terrible battle in trying to find General Fund monies. The Legislature has said this is very important for us to do. Last year it was vetoed down to \$7 million because of economic times. Next year the economy looks even bleaker budgetarywise and what I'm attempting to do is to take Senator Withem's bill, 1123, and put a it part of this package and say, we have monies in the Highway Trust Fund to do what we want to do in two areas, highway building, road construction, bridge repair, infrastructure and another high priority to our children is their education. We have a chance to tap funds that are available that we can use to accomplish the ends in two policy determinations the body has made. And what I'm asking the body to do today is to say, not that I need to protect every penny for what I want in one area, but to say, can I still accomplish the majority of what I want to do in one area of highway trust and can we and should we have the desire and the ability to use some of the other monies that are coming in order to help fund one of the basic needs that our children need and the state needs and our country needs, education? And I clue the senators, you all know this to be true, you've affirmed the policy, the better teacher, the better quality of teacher that we have, the better our students will be, the better we'll be able to restructure and change our way of teaching. And we all know that the best teacher...

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: ...is going to be attracted if there is a salary that they can live competitively, have a lifestyle that they can support a family, that they can have a semblance of a reasonable lifestyle compared to what is offered in other areas. We must be competitive on salary. This is a way the state can say we are willing to put a small part of funding each year into guaranteeing the potential for our children to have the best in education that we can deliver in our state. We're willing to do that, we want to do that, we can determine and accomplish many goals with the monies that we have and it's something that we can use the assets that we have wisely to accomplish multitudes of goals rather than saying we're going to accomplish one, but we're not going to share to accomplish another. The State of Nebraska is at a point and we will continue to be at the point that we can't fund everything totally.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Time.