

Lynch's amendment, though I understand and support the point he's trying to make.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Moore. Senator Horgan.

SENATOR HORGAN: Thank you, Madam President and members. I would rise in support of Senator Lynch's amendment, and knowing full well the likelihood of us coming to a vote on this. But I think it's important that a couple of things be said about the commitment of this body and the state to the educators and the teachers in Nebraska. And it's important, I think, to recognize that the debate that went on over the Highway Trust Fund never really got to the point of talking about what's happening to teachers salaries in this state. And as a result of the state not funding those salaries at the level they have in the past few years, teachers salaries are going to again fall behind on a national level. And it's a disgrace in Nebraska, on a statewide basis, what we pay our teachers. And once again we find that we are short of money, and the money isn't there to help the teachers or to help the educators. I was just across the hall speaking to a local mayor, and you know, she pointed her finger at me and said, how dare you take money out of the Highway Trust Fund, and how dare you take money from roads from local communities and teachers come...try to come in through the backdoor and take money away from the...from roads. I think we need to look at what our priorities are in this state. And I think we need to consider seriously where we're going to put our money in the future. And we need to seriously look at the available resources and the way we're going to allocate them. And education is...is...is the key to the future. And good educators and good teachers are the way that we're going to guarantee that people are able to stay in Nebraska and that the work force is going to be prepared for the challenges ahead tomorrow. And if we're not willing to make that type of commitment to educators, and to encourage professional people to go into that profession, we're going to end up with the type of education that's offered in other parts of this country, which is not as good as it's offered in Nebraska. And we ought to do more things to help professions like teachers, and we ought to do things that are going to be progressive for the State of Nebraska. And not funding the teacher HELP program, this year, is a dramatic step backward for Nebraska, and it's something that we should not be doing. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Horgan. Senator Rasmussen,