

followed by Senators Schmit and Kristensen. Senator Rasmussen.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Yes, Madam President, members of the body, I want to thank Senator Lynch for bringing this amendment, if for no other reason than to have a discussion once again about the importance of teachers and education in the State of Nebraska. A week or so ago, when we were discussing who the one cent sales tax on cars, generated to 1059, actually belonged to, the roads or education, there was a lot of ideas thrown out about how to fund the teacher pay bill that we made a commitment to but have been unable to fund. And unfortunately much of that discussion has come to a halt now that the money is secure in the Roads Department once again. And I think this is a tremendous opportunity for us to remind ourselves that we need to be finding ways to recognize education as equally important as the roads are for our state, and that just as we have secured the funding for that kind of infrastructure, we need to secure the funding for our teachers who are the critical element in quality education for the future of our children. And I would urge all of us to continue the discussion for finding a way to give permanency and stability to what I consider to be important for the survival of this state, and that is quality teachers and quality education. And I would urge us to keep on talking about this. Thank you.

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

SENATOR SCHMIT: Madam Chairman and members, I am reminded, when I listen to the debate here, of a colleague of mine who served with me a number of years ago who would vote for every single capital funding expenditure for education that came along. He was long on voting for buildings, but he was short when it came to providing money for salaries. Because everyone knows that a politician can walk by a building and say, I voted for that building, I voted for the fine arts building in Omaha, I voted for the Lied...or whatever it was I voted for that. And more than one politician have had their pictures taken, along side of an imposing structure, and have used it as campaign material. But very rarely does one have their picture taken with an individual teacher or with a group of students. It's too bad we can't have on the board, instead of just red or green, a reluctant red or a reluctant green, because most of us would use those, I'm sure, a lot of the time, but unfortunately we don't have that option. I voted against, from time to time, bills that I really would have liked to have voted for but knew that