

level. Again, the circumstance that I'm in is I made a promise to the Speaker to withdraw all the amendments that I had if there was any controversy so we could deal with the main bill which needs and must be passed this session. So I certainly hope nobody votes to bracket. At the same time, obviously, I'm disappointed that the elements of the amendment that we had worked out weren't able to be discussed. This particular element, the amendment that Senator Hall is talking about, is actually an amendment from myself who, in working with Senator Hall and Senator Lynch and Senator Schmit, have been very concerned about the increasing cost of hospital expansion in particular. And we are looking at, from 1990 through 1992, a \$200 million plus set of proposals that are in Lincoln and Omaha looking at hospital expansion. And, obviously, if we had a \$200 million capital construction budget for the State of Nebraska, there would be a lot of taxpayers upset while the ratepayers of insurance premiums and others are very upset about the cost of health care. And so I thought it was important to offer the amendment to get a discussion about it briefly and then make the point, and then, frankly, because the main bill was so important, you know, if this amendment got attached, it would jeopardize it. And so I didn't have any expectation the amendment would be adopted, but I thought, again, it was an important issue to at least be brought to your attention for a few minutes. I also want to note that yesterday I met with the Governor and representatives from Omaha hospitals to discuss cooperation. Senator Schmit's bill, when it came out of committee that set a moratorium, this moratorium comes from Senator Schmit's bill, when Senator Hall and the Revenue Committee advanced the bill that took away the tax exemption, the message was heard around the state by the hospitals who had been, I think, feeling that everything was going to work out with their lawsuit and the Legislature and everybody was going to finally, you know, work out whatever needed to be worked out and let it go. But that message has clearly been sent and received that this Legislature is concerned about the cost of health care, we're concerned about what's happening and particularly in the hospital cost of capital construction. That message has been sent and received and evidently there's some very constructive initiatives going on in Omaha right now with trustees being involved in some reform of their system. I'm excited about it. For the first time, I feel the hospitals in Omaha have truly recognized the problem and are willing to try and do something. Will they do it? I don't know. I've been disappointed in the past but I do feel that this discussion,