

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. I have traveled throughout Nebraska and I have certainly listened to public radio as I've traveled via vehicle, and certainly there are parts of Nebraska where that seems to be the only radio station that you can get and it has been a good companion as I travel. But I, too, have a concern when we, in our resolution, urge the Congress of the United States to continue critical support of education and public telecommunications. There are really very few areas that...cable, other television networks are not available. I also want this body to think that for a moment that our national public television has a larger staff than any of the major networks, and I do believe that in private enterprise that they can pick up the slack where perhaps our taxpayers dollars are being spent. I listened to Senator Withem and really appreciated his words. And I, too, have urged my congressman to cut back on the national public television and public radio because I think that there are dollars that seem to be from a bottomless pit. And I will not support this resolution. I think that our Nebraska television, our Nebraska radio has done a tremendous job. But if we are really going to serve the people of the United States, I would rather do so with health and with education, but not through subsidy. I'm one who believes in user fees. And if the people want it, if they want to pay for it, gee, I'm all for that. But to take tax dollars on a public television that is, like I said, with larger staff than our...any of our networks, I cannot support that, so I will not be supporting this resolution. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Vrtiska.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. At the outset of the development of public radio and public television I was not one who was very much inclined to support it, be thinking about all of the competition in the other fields of entertainment that were basically free. But as I looked through the process, and we talk about subsidization, you have to remember that we're really subsidizing all of the national networks to stay in business. They don't get their money off of trees, they have to sell a product and that product probably costs more, undoubtedly cost more money because it's supporting some kind of a program on television. So, in a sense, you're subsidizing that program the same as you are national television. And I guess the thing that really bothers me is some of the trash that's on television in this day and age