

February 16, 1995 LB 830

SPEAKER WITHTEM: Yes, Senator Crosby. Madam President and members of the body, stand to begin the explanation of LB 830. It's kind of interesting. Sometimes we come to the floor not terribly well prepared to make our arguments on bills because we haven't done our homework and don't have enough information. This is one where there is so much information floating around about, I'm not really sure what to include within my ten minutes. This bill, along with the other two that have been designated early Speaker priority bills, for purposes of meeting a deadline, are very important pieces of legislation, not just to this project but I think for the overall economic future of our state. I'll say up front, very admittedly, that the impetus for these bills being before us, in this form, at this time, and the need to move quickly, is because Nebraska is one of three states that is being considered for an expansion project by Micron Technology. Micron is a manufacturer of computer chips. It is, as we know, the computer chip manufacturing business is one of the largest growth industries in the entire world. This company is one of the largest manufacturers of those projects and they are looking to expand. And, as we found out earlier this week, this is not a replay of some situations where we've seen where a company is planning to make an expansion within their own state and they go out and shop around to try to increase the incentives within their own state, because they have announced that they are not expanding in Idaho, that they are going to either Nebraska, Oklahoma or Utah. I'm one of those that wishes we didn't have to pass this kind of legislation. I really wish we lived in a world where economic development business decisions were based purely on market decisions and that is the extent of it. That would not be and is not a realistic approach and the day and age we are now in, with projects of this size, it is...it is important that a state be competitive, if that state is interested. And also would point out that the 49 of us are going to be able to answer that question. It is a fair public policy question to ask and some states have indicated that, no, they're not interested in being competitive in that arena. And if this body chooses not to pass this legislation or alternative legislation, then we will have made that decision. I think that would be an unwise decision. I think it's important that we pass this legislation. What would this project, this specific project mean to Nebraska? Well, a lot of the information is rightfully so because this is a proprietary business not available to us. They don't open their spread sheets, their balance sheets, their annual reports and all of those types of factors to us. But what we can