

mandate is this, that all K-12 districts and affiliated systems will have a direct connection to the statewide public computer information system, such as Internet, by June of the year 2000. The funding is this, \$2.5 million annually for three years from the Education Innovation Fund. Annually it is close to \$9 million. Let me repeat that, the Education Innovation Fund is close to 9 million, and Internet is an innovation because it states so in the statutes. And there have been a few where they've used a small portion of the money to connect Internet, and you can in your handout, I've given you a handout of the proposals that have been funded. LB 860 grew out of my own experience with Internet. I participated in a seminar, I think, I don't know, was it last year or the year before, Senator Kerrey had it out at the Continuing Center, and I was awakened to the powerful...incredible power that Internet could have in our schools, not only as a teaching tool but also as a research tool and also for the gifted students. It was through this, through my sharing this enthusiasm with teachers and administrators that I first heard this question, how do we get schools hooked up? I can still remember that seminar, we had round-table discussions on how this would be funded, and as Senator Withem stated, that the Educational Service Units have 14 percent of their budget which is not under the lid to implement this. But remember this, none of that money, none of the money goes to schools. None of it goes to schools, and I've given you a handout on ESU units, and you will see that several of them have, they have already spent \$4 million and they've hooked up very few, very few; it is 57 out of 200 and...I think it is 278 K-12 schools that are hooked up to Internet. Schools, as I mentioned, the ESUs have done this. I think they've tried, they've done a good job in getting the service of staff development going, and also the equipment, but I think there is a lot of lagging behind and I think there is a number of reasons this happens. But in addition to that, we have encouraged the statewide system in which, as I mentioned, 100 percent of the ESUs have a dependable, regular source of funding for Internet. And as I mentioned, 278 schools, and I think it is 58 schools that are connected. I know that there are some reluctant and others strongly opposed to changing any portion of the lottery distribution statutes, and you heard from one this morning. It does not change the 49.5 percent of lottery proceeds which now go to education. This does not attempt to use educational funds for a noneducation purpose. It recognizes a problem and offers a solution. Because when we passed the ESU bill, we mandated, and that was a mandate to do something with Internet. As far as