

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Maurstad.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: David, under the CDBG grant, you were... I missed what you said, and that's why I am asking you, so I don't want to misquote. Did I hear you say that under the CDBG grants, that those grants are not geared for retailers and that is why retailers would not be covered in this particular bill?

SENATOR MAURSTAD: That's correct. That's one of the reasons that it is not a part of this bill is that, as you've indicated, what the intent is in subsection (2), to supplement existing economic development programs, including the Community Development Block Grant, so it has traditionally been used, as eligible businesses in our state, we've used the guidelines of the Community Development Block Grant program so that we don't run contrary to that program and not being able to comply with those federal funds that are available for many of these projects.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, David. And how many dollars do you think are... does Nebraska have on the CDBG grant monies? Not that you would have that at the top of your head, but I thought maybe you might have an idea.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Yeah, I am going to say approximately \$6 million, and there are probably applications every year for three to four times that amount that don't get funded because not enough dollars are available through the federal program.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Yeah, thank you. Thank you, Senator Maurstad. I appreciate that bit of information. One of the concerns that I have, and Senator Maurstad emphasized that, and I appreciated that, is that we, in Nebraska, unfortunately can't do everything we want to do. We can't do everything in economic development for big industries, for new industries, for value-added industries, for depressed areas industries. We don't have enough for the CDBG grants. We don't have enough for to test the waters. We don't have enough for the environment. We don't have enough for higher education, as the university is now going through on the Appropriations Committee discussions of whether they will be fully funded on their request, which I assume they will not be. We don't have enough money to do all these things. And one of the things that this bill does is do things that we are already spending dollars to do, and there