

amendment again, hopefully after it is adopted. Again, I rise in support. I believe that it's a better draft than the original amendment as it was offered. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Hall. Senator Maurstad.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Madam President, members of the Legislature, I also rise in support of the Wickersham amendment and think that it certainly appropriately targets those areas of our state that need assistance. I want to address maybe a couple of concerns that have been raised, one relative to the issue about grants. I believe, and I might, here again might be corrected, but I think it would be unlawful to provide a grant directly to a business and that's the reason why we work, the state works through and with area economic development groups and communities. So those grants generally speaking would go to the communities that would use for various parts of the overall package, might be a street, it might be paving a highway, it might be bringing electrical service to a new area where the business might be expanding into, so the grants would go to the communities to provide a part of the infrastructure relative to the total package. Also relative to the grants, very seldom would they be the only part of an economic development project especially one the size of what we're talking about here. And in that there always is a memorandum of understanding between the parties involved which outlines the various responsibilities of the parties and collateral agreements are a part of that and I want to make sure that there isn't any misconception that there are economic development loans being made out there by the State of Nebraska and by communities that aren't collateralized now. That is done as a standard procedure. I think it's a mischaracterization then to indicate that these dollars would strictly be cash payments or outright payouts to businesses this size. I think that that would be a mischaracterization of what the bill and what current practice is. And finally, relative to Senator Hall's question on the language on line 9, whether it be either directly or indirectly through the communities, I think that's important. The indirectly through the communities obviously is in the area of the area economic development corporations which would then work with a community or communities, but also directly with communities for those issues that are relevant that way. I think it's important that there is accountability at the local level for these projects. I think that the partnership between the state and the local