

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Wickersham.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...on some of these provisions. First of all, a kind of general philosophic question. In a portion of the Engel amendment which is not reconstructed by you, it is left in the bill that the Legislature finds the reason that we're doing all this is to remain competitive with those of, with the programs of other states and localities. As I then read through the Engel amendment and read through your amendment to the Engel amendment, I don't see anything in here that ties all this back into economic competition with other states and that part of it is very important to me because I don't know why government is in the business of providing funds to businesses that may not be able to survive on their own. I mean I think we ought to have a bit more of an Adam Smith attitude towards these things unless we are driven to government involvement through competition with the other states. What in here with your amendment drafted as it is, in any way would force with respect to the analysis of a particular project, force an analysis of whether competition with another state is involved in the matter?

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: It doesn't, Senator, and quite frankly, if I had my druthers, all references to competition with other states would be stricken from not only this bill, but any other bills in the State of Nebraska. I think that's inappropriate. We can legitimately enter into economic development initiatives if they confer benefits on the citizens and the State of Nebraska in general. We should not do that simply because somebody else is doing something more.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay, then I will...

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: I will offer an amendment on Select File that will cause us to have a cost benefit analysis of the grants. Loans already have a kind of cost benefit analysis implicit in them in that you have an interest rate, so that they're expected to pay back the principal plus some interest. There is a benefit.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well I guess I happen to believe that government shouldn't be in this business and that overall economically it is a detriment to everybody when we are unless we're talking about situations where there is competition as between the states and I will draft an amendment that will allow us to have a discussion on that point.