

SENATOR BOHLKE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and members, you know, the first time I spoke on this I tried to give you a little background on the three different options and I was anxious to hear Senator Chambers' reaction because I think, Senator Chambers, when I first gave you a copy of the waivers, at that time I said I would be anxious to hear your reaction to this proposition as to what you thought would be the better way to go. So far, as I said, I've heard the argument supporting it. One thing that we haven't talked about is just the cost of the food stamps to the state which is a whole different dimension to the argument, and that certainly is the cost that we have to have when we hold in Omaha over \$500 million, you know, in food stamps at one time, guarding that. We've had instances where we've had robberies of food stamps, and so there's a cost. There's a cost in mailing those out. If you've seen the envelope in which the food stamps are mailed, there is a cost to that. The way that it would work now, it would be simply put on the same check that's sent out for the ADC payment. So there definitely is a cost savings, but that is probably not the real issue on what and how we want to decide, if you want to support Senator Janssen's or not. The issue is what do we want to move people as we move them off of welfare and into jobs? And how do we want to best prepare them to make that move? Now, as I said, I've, in the very beginning, thought that some day, and I think probably some day we may go to the debit card. Originally, as I said, my first meeting, that was an idea that I supported at that first committee meeting. There is a high cost to that. Perhaps there will be a time that we could negotiate with whoever was going to hold those funds as you draw that down to help with implementing the cost of putting those machines in Benkelman and Beaver City and Arthur, Nebraska, you know, there will be a cost to that. The other problem is currently if that person loses that debit card, we are going to...they are liable for the first \$50, the state is liable for everything thereafter. Now we are, in the meantime, trying to get the feds to deal with that issue and I think it's been indicated in the next couple of years they will be able to do that. But that's why I've been anxious to get to this issue. And, really, I'm anxious to hear what Senator Pirsch is saying and her objections, what Senator Janssen is saying, and I was anxious to hear what Senator Chambers thought on the issue. Apparently he hasn't made up his mind yet. But that's why I wanted to get to this because we hadn't debate this issue and I'm interested in hearing input from all of you. I'm not, you know, I'm not drawing a line in the sand and saying without this waiver I