

that we're discussing right here, is a path down which we don't want to go any further than we already have. So I thought the Appropriations Committee did the right thing. This universal thought that vacancy savings would be there and cover this shortfall and take care of the problem didn't play out when the facts were looked at and the figures were looked at and Appropriations Committee looked at each one of the agencies and one of them was the university, and said this isn't something that will work in this case and, in fact, they need more faculty and put in more money for that and to cut and have this vacancy savings and have it go away, they need to fill those vacancies. They're not vacancies that are permanent. They are vacancies that occur on an intermittent basis, on a temporary basis. It does save some money but in the end they need to fill those vacancies, or at least that's what I assume the appropriations process found. So if you take this step and if you...if you make this cut and...and we continue with the idea that this is the way we're going to fund the inadequate funding of settlements on salaries, I think you set a dangerous precedent. So I'm very concerned about...about that and that's one point I want to make and I want to commend the Appropriations Committee for looking at this, that we've got to be, I think, sending a signal back. I hope we would all agree on this that when you negotiate a salary with the state employees do it with the idea that you're going to fund it. Don't do it with the idea that somehow we'll make it up, that there will be a magic solution because I don't think there are magic solutions. There's only hard dollars and real impacts when you make that decision. So that's number one. I'm concerned and so I oppose the Bromm amendment because I think the Appropriations Committee sent the right signal and let the Governor cut this out and then let us argue again the point that you shouldn't have signed a settlement with this higher salary if we weren't able to fund it straight up. The second thing I would argue is once again in terms of the university I have always found that in terms of economic development the lesson out of Micron wasn't that the tax breaks were where to go, it's in the university higher education where a lot of economic development is going to going to be in the future. Utah got that plant in large part because they have a solid engineering program at two universities and they have a well educated population with a higher percent with college degrees than Nebraska does, and remember, that's what they cited. That's an area we need to be working on. We need to put resources into higher education, give people opportunities to better themselves through higher education, put