

one you have.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Bernard-Stevens, your light is next.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. I rise to vigorously oppose the Avery amendment but before I get into more of the specifics of why I oppose it, I'd like to ask Senator Avery some questions, but since he's tied up at this point I'd just like to make a couple of comments on the types of cuts that Senator Avery is talking about. I don't mind making cuts when we need to make cuts, but if anybody takes time to look at the green sheet, if you look at the dollars available, if you subtract out 425, Senator Dierks has taken his bill on veterinary medicines off until next year, and if you look at all of the bills on Final Reading and Select, taking off those two bills, everything can pass and we still meet our 3 percent reserve requirement. Let me say that again. If 425 doesn't pass or it's bracketed until next session, Senator Dierks took his bill off until next session, if you actually subtract out those or add if you wish those expenditures, add them back you can pass everything on Final Reading and Select File including ethanol and everything within this appropriations budget and still meet your 3 percent reserve requirement. I want to make that clear. So if we're cutting, we're cutting simply for cutting sake or we are not cutting because we're spending too much. We are meeting our reserve requirement. So if you want to cut, it's because there are specific things you really want to have reduced and that's what I want to talk about. If you haven't taken time, look at each section of Senator Avery's proposal that we cut. This isn't just a General Fund appropriations cut. We're also cutting a lot of intent language. If you look on page 84 of the LB 392, now I'm looking at, this is AM1754 to the E & R amendments, all of a sudden now for some reason we're going to cut on the state college system the distance learning network that we've developed over the last six to eight years, we're going to cut that development program. We're going to not continue or not proceed with what we're doing. What is that program? That is a program that ties all of our rural schools to other schools. That's the program that ties the small rural schools in with Chadron so that they can get a lot of different types of courses and learning. That ties the community to Chadron. That also ties the small towns together. I don't know why we want to do that. That doesn't make any sense just to do that. We're cutting on page 84, Senator Avery would cut the operating costs of the new classroom