

up to you what used to be the emphasis of these provisions, and that was, of course, respond to a nuclear attack or some other foreign attack on the United States or the state of Nebraska. Those threats, in everybody's perception, considerably diminished, and what we see this agency doing now more typically is responding to fires, floods or other natural disasters. So this changes the name, makes some changes in the...make some changes in the definitions to more accurately reflect that focus, also puts in place as one of the objectives of the agency the mitigation of hazards rather than just simply a response to them. The...Senator Beutler touched on one provision that is a requirement in the bill that you have a full-time civil defense director, that is current law. We're simply changing those provisions so that they conform, in a broader scheme, with the increased authorization of political subdivisions to enter into interjurisdictional agreements.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: There's five minutes left on the bill.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: It makes clear that municipalities can have a civil defense, or an emergency management agency if they want one, if there's a county one it goes outside the city. If you want to have a multicounty one, we're going to facilitate that. One other policy change is the ratification of something that has been done as a matter of practice, and that is authorization to spend up to \$10,000 from the Governor's Emergency Fund without declaration of a disaster or an emergency. That is useful when, for example, you have forest fires; we had one at Ft. Robinson, had to call in aerial tankers. You have to have that kind of flexibility in order to bring those kind of resources to bear. You have to be able to act very quickly, you don't have time, necessarily, to jump through all of the hoops. There are some other technical matters, there is a provision that allows a procedure for the Governor to actually terminate a disaster declaration; believe it or not that was very difficult to do under the existing law. We never did know when they ended. It eliminates requirements in the current law for minimum salaries for emergency managers, although there is still a provision that says that they must be paid a comparable salary with other officers in a political subdivision. But, again, that is current law. What we're eliminating is the minimum salary requirements. With that, Madam President, I would be happy to respond to questions, if there are any, in addition to the questions that Senator Beutler raised. And again, I'd be