

SENATOR AVERY: And that is, is this the same amendment, just E & R draft for Select File, so if you want to look. What I'm attempting to do here is...is some time we've got to start looking at making some cuts. We've been adding to the budget and we'll probably add some more as time goes on. But this is an attempt to look at some of the programs, and I know the Appropriations looked at, but I feel it is important that the body maybe look at some of this and see if they want to concur with the appropriations. The spending here, I don't think, is a necessity on the interim. I think it's something that we need to maybe eliminate and let them come back for. This amendment will eliminate \$475,000 from General Fund that is distributed, transit systems to Lincoln and Omaha, the two cities that get probably 50 percent of the federal funding that the state takes in. This is a small amount and I know some of the argument was that their federal funds have been decreasing, but this is a small amount, only cuts about 4 percent of their budget. Now the other parts of the state have to divvy up what's left in terms of the dollars that are...that are gotten through the...through the appropriation process. Lincoln and Omaha have access to these federal funds and get, as I said, the lion's share or 50 percent portion of that. In looking at their total budgets, I don't think this is anything. We're asking all state agencies, we're asking cities, everyone, to cut back. And I think this is important that we continue and this would be in line with some reductions. Again, it's only \$475,000. It isn't out of proportion in terms of cuts that we're asking cities, counties, and other entities to do as well as some in state government. I feel that this.. this is important and a right step to do. I believe both entities could live with this and I ask you to consider this reduction. Some time we're going to have to look and I say now's the time to look at these budgets and look seriously at what...what has been added. And this is a small amount that I feel we could save and possibly pay for some of the cuts or some of the increases that may be coming or just basically reduce spending in state government. So I would ask for your support. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Avery. To discuss the Avery amendment, Senator Wehrbein followed by Senators Crosby and Schimek.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker and members, I rise to