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LB 1348

we're passing out the sheets that...yellow sheets that will give you the details of the proposed budget. I just wanted you to know that those are going to be available and as...I was going to tell you that because they were supposed to be out this afternoon, they're out this morning. And it goes over to the issue of the bill that I'm introducing this morning, LB 1348, which is a rural development bill. This is probably the highest priced money issue that I've introduced since I've been here and it represents the consideration of, in my mind, that it's such a serious issue that I'm willing to try this. I also want to acknowledge Senator Matt Connealy, who in a real sense is as much...really a cosponsor rather than...not the primary sponsor. I mean I am considered that, but I want to recognize his work on this bill and his concern about this bill, so I consider ourselves cosponsors in this particular case. The opening of the bill, there's going to be a committee amendment on it that they'll speak to, but the first page or two is really the...really the importance of what I consider the need for this bill across Nebraska. It's really, I call it, an entrepreneurial bill in the sense that it's designed to encourage entrepreneurialism across the state among farmers and ranchers specifically and related businesses. The intent of the bill is to...is for only two years, starting January or, excuse me, at this point July 1 of 2001 for two more years. It is kind of a delayed starting, partly because it's going to take Department of Agriculture some time to gear up to make the grant process. The intent of the bill is to have grants up to \$75,000 to be awarded to worthy persons, co-ops and so forth. I have a handout I'll hand out here soon that will give possible scenarios for the use of this money. But it's an effort to encourage entrepreneurialism across rural Nebraska, primarily; an effort to get farmers and ranchers to band together to do marketing associations, to do projects that they considered, including value-added processes, including marketing associations, including banding together to do some things for themselves, and that's the reason for the word entrepreneur--to do things for themselves. It's intended to be a jump-start for rural Nebraska, in many cases. As I said, it's for only two years. The intent is for them to help themselves and to also take advantage and to have those increased rewards accrue to themselves. It's in contrast to other bills that are going to be before you that encourage businesses in rural Nebraska, which