

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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SENATOR RAIKES: And four of them, I think, are in Lincoln, is that true?

SENATOR THOMPSON: Yes.

SENATOR RAIKES: So, this would be what I would consider a reasonable distribution of funds throughout the state, half in Lincoln, half in the rest of the state.

SENATOR THOMPSON: I'd prefer not to answer that question.

SENATOR RAIKES: Okay. Well, my question, eight out of twenty-some thousand teachers, now the reason there are only eight is that this is a program that has not been emphasized, or is it because that an awful lot of teachers would simply, for example, if I was a teacher there would be no chance that I would be able to achieve this level, so I wouldn't try.

SENATOR THOMPSON: I believe the answer, and there may be others who can answer this also, is this is relatively new, it's only been in place for a few years. It came out of a national reform based on the fact that there's strong research supporting the correlation between the children's ability to succeed and the skill of the teacher. So when this was developed, it's been implemented nationally. I have some information that's been provided to give you some of that background. There are 4,803 teachers nationally who have achieved this. Some states that reward these teachers, as I mentioned before, there are 22 states that reward the teachers, have seen higher interest once this financial support was provided, and also it's expensive to...

SENATOR RAIKES: Well, I could...

SENATOR THOMPSON: ...to apply. So, I think, for Nebraska teachers part of it is the cost, which this bill would address, and part of it is knowledge, understanding and support of the program. But part of it may be the fact that other states provide a financial incentive which we do not.

SENATOR RAIKES: Well, I'm just, for the moment, focusing on the teaching staff in the state. Do you feel it's reasonable to