

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

March 24, 2000 LB 1399

would hope that you would see that the expenditure of \$20,000 to access this kind of federal money is one that should, I would hope, be an easy decision. Thank you.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: (Visitors introduced.) Senator Vrtiska.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. This excites me somewhat because, as Senator Bohlke had indicated, we are losing some very good teachers out of Nebraska based on the salaries that we pay. And we don't seem to have a real good answer, but perhaps with the study that's being carried on, we can come to some answers. But I think this is exciting, that Senator Schimek's amendment will, in fact, perhaps, and I say perhaps, encourage some teachers to continue their education and enrich "theirself" to the point where they can attract a little better salary and, therefore, not be so quick to want to leave the state of Nebraska for greener pastures. I did show Senator Bohlke, give her a newspaper that I got this morning from Auburn, talking about the superintendent leaving, going to Arizona, indicating that the salaries, starting salaries in Arizona was in the 26,000 dollar rate, while in Nebraska we're about \$21,000. So you can see why some of these people not only want to go to different schools for more money but I suspect because Arizona has a better climate, but then that shouldn't be the real reason. We do have good climate in Nebraska, and we have good people in Nebraska, and I think it's tremendously important that we try to keep some of those good teachers in this state to continue to educate our kids. I think it's exciting and I would hope that you would see fit to support this and, again, help encourage those teachers to advance themselves educationally so that they can provide a quality education for our kids. Not to say that we're not providing a quality education because I think all of us know that the kids in Nebraska score well. They go into the workforce well accepted. And I think, by and large, most of them are well trained. But the opportunity to keep some of those teachers is becoming more and more critical and this is, perhaps, an opportunity that will come forward to encourage these teachers to advance themselves, and as a result be able to attract a little better income. I think most of you know that a lot of our teachers at starting wages are eligible for a lot of government assistance because of the low salaries they are