

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

March 29, 2000 LB 1348

With that, thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Vrtiska. Senator Preister.

SENATOR PREISTER: Thank you, Honorable President. I rise in support of Senator Kiel's amendment. I think that in addition to what Senator Schimek has said, in the bill having been before us in different forms in the past, and through no fault of Senator Kiel's and just through the legislative process we ran out of time, and she, with her best efforts, did as much as she could have to prevent that from happening. So we are here at a time when we have an opportunity. And as I understand the way it's drafted, this would not add any additional General Fund money beyond what's already appropriated in the bill. It wouldn't take this money and just give it to an urban area either. It would be available through grants for small communities in rural Nebraska just as equally as it would be available to the neighborhoods in Omaha or in Norfolk or in Grand Island or Hastings or the other places that have neighborhood associations. So the intent is to provide some minimal funding for these small communities and neighborhood associations to be able to do some things to improve the quality of life within the areas that the folks they represent are in. It, I think, is closely aligned with the intent of LB 1348. It's understandable that Senator Wehrbein and Senator Vrtiska don't want to jeopardize the bill that they have worked long and hard for. I would hope that it would not do that, and I think that the intent is very much in line with what they're trying to do. The assistance that is there is something that can make a big difference in a small community out in rural Nebraska, just as it can make a difference in a neighborhood where folks are volunteering and working to improve conditions, and sometimes the environment that they live in, from illegal dumping and old tires, to other kinds of improvements that these folks are attempting to do. I think that the \$50,000 that is a part of this bill that is also a part of LB 1348 already, would just be moving that amount over into an earmarked segment for these grant funds, is good policy. It is a good thing to do. It's not difficult to understand. It's not a complex issue. And I think it's something that we can certainly do today without needing a lot of technical information to do it. I would encourage the body to support the amendment, and I thank you for