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FLOOR DEBATE

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before us is FA1152 to LB 385. On with discussion. Senator Raikes, followed by Senators Baker, Wehrbein, and Tyson. Senator Raikes, on your amendment.

SENATOR RAIKES: Thank you, Mr. President and members. Following a little bit on what both Senators Beutler and Janssen mentioned, a moral commitment, we have a moral commitment to help pay for a project as yet undefined, compare that a little bit. Do we have any moral commitment to fund state aid to schools? We didn't fully fund that last session. It's dubious as to whether or not we'll be able to do it this session. Is that somehow a moral failing? What about ethanol plants? We've got deadlines in place on ethanol plants. You can't...you can't...we, in my opinion, offered a proposal out there that was way too good. Too many plants or too many entities are likely to take us up on it. It's going to be a big drain on the state's fiscal situation. What about funding the University of Nebraska or the state college system? Are those all moral commitments? We're going to have to back away from those. I don't think there's any question but what we'll back away from those. So, at the same time we're backing away from those commitments, which are at the core of state government's responsibility, we're going to venture off and help a small community build a convention center. Well, I don't have any problem with a convention center in a smaller city. It's probably a great deal. But why unrealistically promise state support? And we keep referring to this as money that's going to sort of fall in from some place. This you need to...you need to focus on this as a General Fund appropriation, much the same as any other General Fund appropriation that you might make. This is, unfortunately, a time to get serious about what it is you can and can't do. I understand the difficulties of commitments made or commitments you could hope you could honor back in '99 or whenever it was this bill came up, but the realistic picture right now is this is the kind of thing we're simply going to have to back away from. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Raikes. Senator Baker, on FA1152.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I also