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Senator Nelson had a hiring freeze, and so I'm a contract employee instead of an actual state employee. And so that was the first experience that I had with that. And so it is an issue that I hope we can address. And that's why I would, obviously, urge the defeat of the committee amendment, so that we can proceed with the green copy as a starting point. I think it's important to note that out of the thousands and thousands of contracts that the state has, there are many different types, whether it's Department of Roads with 1,400 contracts that, you know, contribute to the \$1 billion per year of contracted service; or whether it's the state contracting with Federal Express or a local telephone company at a given place. Each contract might be a little bit different. And I would hate to see us subject every single contract to a...the same process that just generates paperwork, when it's a foregone conclusion that the resurfacing of Highway 71 in western Nebraska...is a foregone conclusion that a state employee will not be performing that service. So I look forward to further debate on this perhaps on Select File. But I hope that we can keep the issue alive so that we can maybe rein in some of the contracts that are out there. But it certainly is an issue that I hope we can address. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Baker.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. I am going to echo some of the things, I'm afraid, that Senator Smith said. I'll try and keep it brief. But I didn't know the turn that this bill was going to take till a little bit ago, because I'm one of those people that had amendments drawn up trying to straighten things out, but I didn't know where to start with them, and they are just left in the file. And I guess that's a good place for them if we're going to withdraw the committee amend...or vote down the committee amendments. But what I want to say is, once we get back to the green copy and begin working on this, that we have various people involved with it. And I certainly would volunteer to help with things that Transportation Committee is dealing with. As Senator Smith mentioned, Department of Roads...and we need to maintain oversight, but I do believe that the executive branch and the legislative branch in this case with Department of Roads does