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FLOOR DEBATE

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PRESIDENT HEINEMAN:      Senator Preister, would you submit to respond?

SENATOR PREISTER:      Thank you, Mr. President.      Yes, I would. Senator Schimek, I pressed my light as you started talking too. We are at the stage where we have assessed some sites. There aren't that many places available that have the amount of land that we need. There is one site that is currently being considered and, yet, we can't make any offer until the money at the state has been appropriated. That means we can submit the application to the federal Veterans Administration, and as soon as we submit it, then at that time we get the okay, then we can move forward with an actual site or a purchase of land. So right now we've narrowed it down. The task force has been involved, but we can't actually move forward until this appropriation process is complete and official.

SENATOR SCHIMEK:      And thank you. And can you tell me is there an architectural plan yet for the home, or is that yet to come?

SENATOR PREISTER:      We don't have an actual architectural rendering. We have some rough kind of plans, site plans more than actual architectural renderings. We haven't hired an architect yet. Again, we don't have the money appropriated, and until the money is appropriated we don't take that next step. So the time line is laid out. The steps are laid out. This is the next component, having the budget amount completed.

SENATOR SCHIMEK:      But we did allocate some money at one time. Then that was just to study the whole situation?

SENATOR PREISTER:      Yes, Senator Schimek, that was to study the feasibility of whether or not it was better to use the existing facility or to build a new facility, to...

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN:      One minute.

SENATOR PREISTER:      ...assess the cost, to determine a number of factors to make the decision on whether we took this step in saying, yes, we do think it's important, we do need to build a