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FLOOR DEBATE

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reductions in energy use, adoption of the 2000 IECC would also help to shield Nebraska homeowners from future fluctuations in energy prices, end quote. Also, with more than 80 percent of the money Nebraskans spend on energy actually leaving the state, the savings produce a strong and immediate benefit for our state's economy by allowing individual homeowners the opportunity to make additional expenditures with their extra money. LB 888 is sound public policy. The bill provides conservation at a time when rising energy costs are an ongoing concern, not just in Nebraska, nationwide. Additionally, numerous improvements have been made in the quality of construction materials that our builders are currently using. Many of these advancements have occurred in the last eight...in the last, excuse me, ten years. Obviously, some communities in our state have implemented the local energy codes already, which are better...so they're better than the 1983 standard. But many of the 69 local code jurisdictions rely on an antiquated state standard. To their credit, the city of Omaha and...have complied...are virtually in compliance with the 2003 IECC. Omaha supports LB 888 in the amended form. The Nebraskaland Conference of Building Officials and Inspectors also expressed their support for the adoption of the amendment I offered at the committee hearing, and Senator Hartnett will address that in a few moments. Over the last few months, I've been in communication on an ongoing basis with a lot of the key stakeholders with this legislation, including the Nebraska State Home Builders, local code officials, and the Nebraska League of Municipalities, city of Omaha, and others. They've all been part of the conversation because I value their input. And based on their comments, we've achieved a consensus on the issues at hand. It is agreed the 1983 energy code we currently have is archaic. It should be noted that if a person wanted to, they couldn't even purchase a furnace to meet 1983 standards because they haven't been manufactured for years. The current models far surpass 1983 efficiency levels. Similar advancements have been made in other products and building materials in today's homes. Adopting LB 888 will allow Nebraska's first-time home buyers the ability to borrow more money without a higher income. It should be pointed out that the Federal National Mortgage Association, or Fannie Mae as it's popularly known, offers a product called an energy efficient mortgage, but it's only