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lives. I've witnessed that in the past. So this is very, very important for our rural areas. It's a great savings to our local taxpayers because without...where I live in South Sioux City, we have a volunteer fire department and that volunteer fire department has saved us, city of South Sioux City, many, many millions of dollars, and the service is just above and beyond. It's excellent. In fact, it's better than when you'd call the private people. So it's very, very important. So I certainly support this. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Engel. Senator Louden, followed by Senator Preister.

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. Most of the speakers up to now have pretty well summed up what the Nebraska Forest Service does as far as the rural fire equipment is concerned. But they also, I won't spend time on that, we have a fire truck at the ranch and we do our own...we are, I guess, considered volunteer firemen because usually out in the country if you have a fire district truck there, why you're a fireman. One of the things that you might mention...that we might mention is that there is over \$2 million annually from federal funds that help fund this Nebraska Forest Service. In fact, if my recollection fits me well, I think last year over 61 percent of the funding came from federal funds. So it's something that if we don't have it, we won't get the federal funds. I think in the fire truck line, one person wrote in and...to me and said that there are 364 fire trucks on loan from the Nebraska Forest Service now in service in 77 counties in Nebraska. Also since 1998, there has been 104 vehicles. And out of that, there was 76 of them were 6 by 6's and 36 of them were 4 by 4 pickups and some smaller pickups that have been assigned to these volunteer fire districts. So this is something that helps everybody around. We can get our fire suppression taken care of with a lot of federal funds. Also I think the city of Lincoln has sent a letter there earlier, when we were testifying on this bill, of the amount of use they get out of the Nebraska Forest Service. In fact, there is one of the foresters is located right down here at the university. So this is something that's not only important to rural areas, but it's important to city areas. I think I mentioned yesterday,