TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office FLOOR DEBATE

February 24, 2005 LB 71

and more programs than what there were...than what there was money to be allocated for these grants. So I want to emphasize that this is not a new program. This is a program that was in effect for two years, and what we're doing in LB 71 is actually enhancing that former program and taking and making it more accountable. Yes, there may have been one or two businesses that did not succeed, but we do not have an account of all of the businesses because accountability wasn't required in the past, and we are requiring accountability. There will be a report given to the Legislature at the end of each year telling and reviewing the programs and how successful they were. of the grants were also given for not only one year, but the second year to build on that success. And I think Senator Connealy said it correctly in the fact that this program, and Senator Wehrbein would agree, I'm sure, was designated to help those small beginning enterprises. They do need money. And I am talking to Senator Raikes. In that list of things that he noted that were in the bill that...what the grant monies could be used for, those are not in any specific order but do list that research...I think any time that you are looking at starting a new business, you need to do some research. And every week, every week when I go home, back to my constituents, I'm...somebody is asking me about is there someway; they have an idea that they would like to start a new business. That is the only way that we're going to retain jobs and retain our young people in rural Nebraska. There have to be opportunities, and that is what this bill does. It provides opportunities for agriculture and small communities, and also for those businesses that want to add value. And there's a good definition in the bill, talking about how do you add value to a product. But some of the projects and the grant money could be used for research, it could be used for education and training, and this is where they get the assistance of the university to help, and some other private groups, to help them in this endeavor, market development, development of cooperatives. Again, this money cannot go to any single individual or a business. promote partnerships and networks, and we know that that's what works in rural communities, because we just don't have the population back there and people do need to work together. It does...it provides some start-up or working capital for the development of the project. It might be community-based,