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FLOOR DEBATE

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two, that's \$150,000. But the fiscal note said that they wanted \$67,000 the first year, \$69,000 in the second, in order to administer it. So you actually couldn't fully fund two projects up to \$75,000, under your bill with the committee amendment.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Does the fiscal note right now say \$67,000 with \$200,000,...

SENATOR REDFIELD: It would depend on...

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: ...or was that for the...

SENATOR REDFIELD: The fiscal note, I understand, has changed in order to fund the portion of the amendment that Senator Synowiecki passed, but I don't know that that would change the portion that would go to your project.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Okay. Well, I'll have to look into that some more, Senator, but I would tell you it was a maximum grant level of \$75,000. That's maximum, and I envision these communities getting \$5,000 and \$10,000 and \$15,000 in grants. So we will be able to fund a considerable number of projects. And yes, I would like...like Senator Chambers, I'd like to ask for \$10 million for rural Nebraska, but you see the problem we're having here. We're talking a small amount of money and we have a lot of opposition. But I think rural Nebraska is very, very deserving of that, and if we continue to support the bills for the urban areas, why shouldn't rural Nebraska get their share? I mean, 80 out of 93 counties have lost population in the last census. Eighty out of 93 counties. We cannot wait any longer till we get that approach that's going to be the savior for rural Nebraska. We have to start and we have to start now, but we have to go at that. In rural Nebraska, if we can get just a few people to stay in any given community a year, just...it makes a big difference. You're all tired of hearing it, but you've heard me talk about the call center in Wausa, those 30 jobs in Wausa. That's equivalent to around 16,000 to 17,000 jobs in Omaha. That's what the economic impact is. It is absolutely huge. So calculated out, if we get one job or two jobs or three jobs, it makes a difference to us, and we can't wait. We have to start doing that. Right now the annual wages