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LB 425

on the motion to reconsider. Senator Jensen.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. First of all, I appreciate very much...and I've said it publicly to...and I've also said it privately to Senator Don Pederson...I just think the Appropriations Committee this year has done a very good, credible job, and I appreciate that. And I recall when we were at...all of us together, at the symposium at the Platte River State Park and I had moment to say a few things and I said that I think we need to be very careful; that we're coming off of several years of shortfall and now all of a sudden we've got some dollars, that we be very careful in the programs that we enter into in the future and how that might be affected. And, yes, then we get into a legislative session and then we sometimes forget some of that. But I do think it's very important that we be careful as to the programs that we enter into. And in the committees, when Senator Howard's bill came forward, it was a good bill. We worked on that. brought it forward, but we did not pass that bill out of the committee with an A bill -- no funding. Senator Howard did go to the Appropriations Committee and they funded that, and that is a good program. Don't...don't...I will not argue with that. We had that, a program like that, in Omaha several years ago and I was disappointed that the funding ran out and we had to cease that, because it was one of the few programs that we could look back and say, that was...that had good results. However, it is a new program that we have also taken these dollars out. for years I've gone to conferences and I've looked at other states and I've listened to them and how they've used their TANF money, and I come back here to Nebraska energized and say, gee whiz, look at what these other states have done. They've taken TANF money and, like Oklahoma, set up a marriage program. Others have set up family programs. Some have funded uninsured. Some have funded clinics for the poor with their TANF money. So I come back to Nebraska and I say, why can't we use our TANF money for that? All of our TANF money in the past has gone for childcare, childcare; \$68 million a year we are spending today for childcare. We've never had any extra money until now we have some bonus money, if you want to call it. You want to call it reward money, whatever it is, we have these dollars, and so how can we use those? We used some for Senator Howard's bill.