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FLOOR DEBATE

March 14, 2006 LB 605

CLERK: LB 605, Mr. President, a bill by Senator Thompson. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 18 of this year, referred to the Appropriations Committee for public hearing. The bill was advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM1285, Legislative Journal page 1287, First Session, 2005.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Thompson, you're recognized to open.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker...Mr. President, members of the body. I will open on the bill, and Senator Pederson will address the committee amendment eventually, which will become the bill, so I'm just going to give the overall background to it, and then you can hear more about it as we move through the amendment process. In 1997 the Task Force for Building Renewal was established after the Legislature studied the condition of state buildings and discovered severe maintenance problems across the state. The task force was given the responsibility of reviewing, prioritizing, and recommending funding for the most critical deficiencies. Each biennium the task force begins an allocation process for state agency requests for projects that may be eligible for the funding by the task force. In fiscal year '05-07's biennium budget, submittals to the task force totaled over \$409 million in deferred repair, fire, life safety issues, ADA, energy needs, and of that amount, \$320 million was submitted the the University of Nebraska and Nebraska state colleges. In 1998 the Legislature passed a mechanism to be able to move along some of the issues dealing with the higher education institutions in the state, give them a funding mechanism to be able to get to some of this maintenance, bulk of the maintenance issues that we have out there with the buildings, because the longer you put a lot of things off, the faster the buildings deteriorate and the greater the problems become. After that bill was passed in 1998, both the state college system and the university system were able to get to, through the issuance of revenue bonds, a lot of issues dealing with the renovation and replacement of aging buildings on all the campuses. At the University of Nebraska-Lincoln the bill authorized...oh, University of Nebraska system, excuse me, the bill authorized \$5.5 million per