

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

March 14, 2006 LB 605

in the early 1900s. Now...so we're going to do twenty-first century physics research in this building, which doesn't even have a bathroom. So I think that we need to start looking at these properties and saying, now wait a minute, where are we as a state? We spend a lot of time, a lot of effort discussing the education system in the state of Nebraska, and I think we have a big deficiency in that system in that we now have properties that are not up to the standard that they need for the existing purposes. I think we're beyond the point of saying we need to repair buildings, we need to fix them up. We are to the point that we need to have buildings that are accessible for the twenty-first century technology. We need to have a building that...we're trying to attract at the University of Nebraska, and I'm just focusing on that as an example. We're trying to attract a world-class physicist, and if you walked into that Brace Hall, you would look at that and you would say, this is the primary physics lab? This is where we want to bring a world-class physicist to focus Nebraska's attention to the sciences? And you would say, this is ridiculous. And we could repair Brace Hall; I don't know how we'd do it exactly, but in looking at the figures, it would cost more to fix up Brace Hall than it would be to tear it down and start over again and have an adequate facility. And I think we have to ask ourselves, what kind of educational process do we want in this state? I think that we need to start addressing the issue of bringing our university and state colleges up to the class level that we can say, we have a product here that is worthy of our students, that we want to have our students in those schools so that they can face the competitive world that we're in right now. We're not in a world where we just compete with Iowa or Kansas or South Dakota. We are in a world that competes with the rest of the world, and I think we have to look at that in that vein. So we have to have the highest class facilities in this state so that our graduates are on a basis that they can compete with anybody, and we're not there. We won't be there unless we start having facilities that will accommodate this kind of experience for these young people, and not just young people; older people, too. We have to have...it's not just a school. What it is, is a place where we can excel, and we do have that opportunity to excel. I was reading a book called The World is Flat, and in the book, The World is Flat, written by Thomas Friedman, he