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

March 23, 2006 LB 1060

meth problem in Nebraska, and I know that might be one of the hot topics or one of the big fancy words that we use to invoke emotion in any given debate, but we look at our law enforcement agencies, we say what are you doing about the problem, how many meth heads have you arrested this year, what are you doing to stop methamphetamine labs? And then we come down to Lincoln and, because the federal government didn't restore the funding, we look back at them and say, oh, we're not going to play politics with the federal government. I don't know that that's what folks in here want to do, but I guess my interest is for the citizens of Nebraska to try and make sure we have law enforcement statewide, trained professionals that work in collaboration in multiagency departments on these drug task force to do what's right for the drug problem in Nebraska, and that's what we have with the Bryne funding. It has brought common purpose of arresting agencies together for the individuals that violate our controlled substance laws in Nebraska. I'll give you a short example, and it's from my area, because I'm more familiar with the SNARE Drug Task Force. But the Stanton County Sheriff, Mike Unger, and I don't represent his area, Senator Connealy does, he grabbed me in the courthouse a couple of months ago and he said: Please don't let that Byrne funding escape us; we need that; that Byrne funding is what allows us to participate in a drug task force; we don't have the resources as a Stanton County Sheriff's Department, to go bust the meth lab a mile out of Madison County, still in our county, and to observe what's going on there and to make sure that we build our case the right way; we need the Bryne funding to bring these departments together. And because SNARE exists and because a number of counties cooperate for the purpose of operating a drug task force, they work with members of the State Patrol, the Norfolk Police Department, the Columbus Police Department, and they're all there working together to stop...and the Stanton County Sheriff's Department, to make an arrest on a meth lab or to...or to make a buy so that they can arrest somebody else that is either manufacturing or methamphetamine or whatever the controlled substance may be. You look at these departments and you say, what are you doing, Mr. Sheriff, and then you come down to Lincoln and I think it's our obligation to fund the work, the good work, of these multiagency departments across the state. And what I've